MRS. RAFORD, HUMANIST

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

By LEANDO BROWN

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MRS. RAFORD, HUMANIST

L. E. LANDONE, Inc.
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MRS. RAFORD, HUMANIST

A SUFFRAGE DRAMA

BY

LEANDO BROWN

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AUTHOR'S WORD

The paragraphing of single lines is not an attempt to imitate blank verse. It is done for ease in reading only.

There is no assumption of literary merit—only a sincere desire that the message the book contains will be of value to both man and woman.

The book is intended as a reading play; an acting version is prepared in manuscript form.

The author's thanks are due to Mr. Broughton Tall for helpful collaboration and to Mr. Luther Anthony for critical advice.

LEANDO BROWN.

Author's Club
2 Whitehall Court
LONDON, S. W.

August 29th, 1912.

1106125

PERSONS

The mother.....Mrs. Leland-Raford

The son.....Richard Leland-Raford

The daughter.....Gertrude Leland-Raford

The suffragist.....Miss Mabel Leland

The child.....Dick

The doctor.....Paul Fawtell

The trustees..... Mr. Coleman
Mr. Farson

The tenant.....Jean Cairns

The nurse.....Miss Brainard

ACT I

Scene—Tenement Room.
Time—Late Winter Afternoon Seven Years Ago.

ACT II

Scene—Library, Raford Home.
Time—June Morning Seven Years Later.

ACT III

Scene—Same as Act II.
Time—Afternoon, One Week Later.

MRS. RAFORD, HUMANIST

ACT I

SCENE. *A room in a cheap tenement. The monotony of bare, discolored walls is broken, on the left by a projection with slanting ceiling, marking stairway to floor above, and in the rear by a window with small panes, one broken and stuffed with rags, the others affording a glimpse of a small narrow court beyond. There are two doors. One to the left leading to another room, shut off by a thread-bare dirty curtain. The other to rear right, leading to hallway. The bareness of the room is heightened by the meagre furnishing, consisting of a plain wooden table half down stage right, with small unlighted lamp, three rough, unpainted chairs and a few cooking utensils hanging from wall of projection. A battered sink with faucets, down stage right, adds to the general wretchedness; a cook stove to rear of sink only heightens the prevailing coldness. A white nurses' table, with alcohol lamp, etc., down stage from projection, and a partially installed telephone on the right wall—both foreign to their environment—serve as the only reminders of another and brighter world.*

It is late afternoon and the few stray shafts of fading light are engulfed in the deepening gloom of the apartment.

Large feathery flakes fall silently past the window. It has been snowing since midday.

The curtain rises slowly, disclosing a man, a mechanic in working costume, installing telephone on the right. He finishes after a few seconds and puts receiver to his ear.

MAN.

(*Over phone.*)

Hello, exchange! New installation. Give me a ring, please.

(*Bell rings clearly.*)

All right, thank you.

Good-bye.

(*Hangs up receiver and begins collecting his tools.*)

(JEAN, *the tenant, enters from hallway. A Scotch woman, past middle age, rather stout, with a round, genial, sympathetic countenance. She carries a bundle of wood and is out of breath from her climb. Puts down wood and stands, hands on hips, watching the man.*)

JEAN.

(*Breaking silence.*)

You're no' puttin' o' they telephones in mony rooms doun this way?

Are ye?

MAN.

No.

You must be blowin' yourself!

JEAN.

It disna come oot o' ma pouch!

But, it's nae wonder you're surprised! We're havin' lots o' things we're nae accustomed tae! When the poor lassie ben there came six weeks ago I had no money to pay the rint an' she'd but a wee

bit to buy food; yet we got oon! But e'er since that bonnie Miss Raford's been ta'an care o' her, we've had aa' kin' o' things tae eat an' plenty o' wood tae burrn! Just look at that table o'er there!

(*Points to* NURSE'S *table.*)

Is that no real neat?

And noo we hae a telephone!

Since Miss Raford been comin' here, her mither insistet that we should hae a telephone in the hoose, so she could keep in touch wi her daughter.

MAN.

What Rafords?

JEAN.

What Rafords?

Are there mair than one family o' the Rafords?

If the government kenned hoo stoopeed ye Irish are they'd keep ye oot o' the States.

Rafords?

It's the Mrs. Leland-Raford wha lives on Fifth Avenue.

There's one o' they art galleries and a palm garden and a Turkish bath richt inside her ain hoose.

(*Looks around room.*)

MAN.

Are these her tenements?

JEAN.

Yes! I suppose she disna care how they are, but the young Miss Raford dis.

She's been doun here every day for three weeks tae tak care o' the sick lassie, ben there.

And her brother comes tae.

They brought her a nurse and a doctor.

Oh, they dae things real weel whin they ance begin.

MAN.

(*Looks about room.*)

These rooms could stand a little steam heat, a few electric lights and a tile bath or two.

JEAN.

A tile bath!

(*Also glances about and shivers.*)

I hope to goodness they'll put in a new pane o' glass afore the weather is much caulder.

(*Goes to stove.*)

(MAN *finishes gathering tools and is about to leave.*)

(*Walks heavily to door.*)

Can ye nae be quiet?

Didna I tell ye there's a sick lassie ben there.

MAN.

(*Exiting.*)

So long, old girl!

JEAN.

(*Calling after him, seemingly provoked.*)

Awa wi ye; ye nasty craitur!

(*Sarcastically.*)

Tak the stairs!

They lift is nae working the day!

(*Laughs at her own joke.*)

Lift! It'll be a lang, lang day afore there's a lift in this hoose.

(JEAN *busies herself about fire.*)

(NURSE *enters from sick room carrying a glass.*)

NURSE.

(*To* JEAN.)

Is the phone ready?

JEAN.

Yes, he just left, Miss.

NURSE.

(*Sets glass on table, goes to phone.*)

I'm glad it's in; she's worse!

(*Over phone.*)

Main 2670, please.

(JEAN *watches intently* NURSE'S *use of phone, showing she does not understand its use.*)

Hello.

(*Pause.*)

Doctor Fawtell?

(*Pause.*)

This is Miss Brainard.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

The phone's just in.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

She is worse, very much worse.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

I think you'd better come at once.

(*Relieved.*)

Thank you.

(JEAN *heaves a sigh of relief;* NURSE *hangs up receiver; goes to nurse table, turns out blaze of alcohol lamp, takes cup and exits to sick room.* JEAN *moves up to phone, looks it over, handling cord, touching different parts—phone rings suddenly,* JEAN *jumps back astounded, fearing she has caused the ring; she comes near again, the ring is repeated; she looks toward bed room door; then bravely takes down receiver and speaks into it.*)

JEAN.

Hello.

(*Pause.*)

(*Sees her mistake, puts receiver to ear.*)

Yes, Mrs. Raford, this is me.

(*Pause.*)

Me.

(*Pause.*)

Jean Cairns.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, he just fixed it.

(*Pause.*)

No, Miss Gertrude is gone out.

(*Pause.*)

I'll tell her.

Hello! Hello!

Yes.

Yes, I'll tell her——

(*Enter* GERTRUDE, *in street costume, through hall door.*)

She is a girl of eighteen, graceful and pretty, with features moulded by generations of cultured refinement and a countenance, naturally bright yet showing that she is highly conscious of the suffering near her.

(*Into phone.*)

She's comin' right noo!

(*Pause.*)

(*Turns, looks at* GERTRUDE, *and signals to her.*)

(*Into phone.*)

Juist wait a meenit!

Here's Miss Raford noo!

GERTRUDE.

(*Pleased.*)

Oh, the phone's in!

(*To* JEAN.)

Who is it?

JEAN.

Yer mither.

GERTRUDE.

(*Goes to phone; to* JEAN.)

Thank you.

(JEAN *sits down, holds herself, completely exhausted by the unusual strain.*)

(*Over phone.*)

Hello, mother dear.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, mother.

(*Pause.*)

No.

(*Pause.*)

No, I can't.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, she's very ill.

(*Pause.*)

And, mother, there's a little baby now, too!

JEAN.

(*To herself.*)

A wee bairnie and sae clever!

GERTRUDE.

Yes, born early this morning.

(*Smiles.*)

But, mother, it wouldn't be right for me to leave.

(*Pause.*)

Coming down here after me?

JEAN.

(*Overcome with astonishment.*)

Losh me!

GERTRUDE.

(*Joyfully.*)

Please do!

Yes, please do.

JEAN.

(*Whispering.*)

Is yer mither comin' here?

GERTRUDE.

(*Nodding to* JEAN.)

(*Over phone.*)

Yes, do; then you can see conditions for yourself.

(JEAN *looks about room.*)

(GERTRUDE'S *face becomes very serious.*)

Mother, I haven't exaggerated at all!

It's really frightful!

(JEAN *nods affirmingly.*)

Why I didn't know such places even existed.

And to think we own such tenements!

(*Pause.*)

Yes, I do want you to see the buildings yourself.

(*Pause.*)

What's that?

(*Pause.*)

Aunt Mabel?

(*Pause.*)

Yes, ask her to come with you.

I'm sure she won't mind.

(*Pause.*)

Good-bye.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Third floor, rear.

(*Pause.*)

Yes. Good-bye, mother.

(*Gertrude hangs up receiver, removes wraps.*)

JEAN.

Is yer mither really comin'?

GERTRUDE.

Yes, Mrs. Cairns.

JEAN.

And yer auntie, too?

GERTRUDE.

Yes, Aunt Mabel's coming with her.

(JEAN *bustles about, attempting to make things more presentable.*)

(GERTRUDE *looks about room, shivers.*)

GERTRUDE.

It's so cold here!

Can't we get a little more heat, someway?

JEAN.

Cauld?

No, Miss, it's real cozy the noo!

Tho' it was vera draughty in here some o' they cauld days afore we had plenty o' wood.

(JEAN *goes to stove and stirs up fire again.*)

(*Enter* NURSE.)

GERTRUDE.

(*Looking to sick room.*)

How is she?

NURSE.

(*Hesitating.*)

Worse, much worse. I don't think she'll live through the night.

JEAN.

She nae goin' to dee, is she?

NURSE.

I'm afraid your little friend can't live.

(*Gertrude is silent, her face showing how deeply she is affected.*)

JEAN.

(*Brokenly.*)

I dinna ken she was sae bad; I dinna ken it!

(*Breaks down crying.*)

(DOCTOR FAWTELL *enters hurriedly from rear center. Carries instrument case.*)

(*He is young, well built, good looking, dignified, but genial. A man of the better sort.*)

NURSE.

Good afternoon, Doctor.

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Nods to* NURSE *and to* JEAN; *takes* GERTRUDE'S *hand.*)

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

How's Lady Bountiful?

GERTRUDE.

Very well, Paul, thank you, but I'm sad.

(*Looks toward sick room.*)

DR. FAWTELL.

Yes, I understand.

(NURSE *exits to sick room.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*Taking his hat and shaking snow from it.*)

Didn't brother come with you?

DR. FAWTELL.

I haven't seen him today.

Hasn't he been here?

GERTRUDE.

No, he hasn't.

But I won't scold him.

It's the first day he's missed.

(*Enthusiastically.*)

He's really interested in slum work now.

(*Smiling.*)

He's been here with me every day the poor girls' been ill.

(*Pause.*)

I'm afraid she's much worse, Paul.

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Opening medicine case.*)

Yes, I know.

GERTRUDE.

(*Taking hold of his arm.*)

Can't you save her, Paul?

DR. FAWTELL.

I'll do everything I can—how's the baby?

JEAN.

He's that happy, and tae think he dinna ken he may soon lose his mither.

GERTRUDE.

Poor little thing.

(*Pause.*)

What will become of him?

DR. FAWTELL.

They'll send him to some foundling's home, I suppose.

(*Doctor* FAWTELL *goes into sick room.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* JEAN.)

Hasn't she said a word about the father?

JEAN.

Niver a word!

GERTRUDE.

Isn't it strange he doesn't come to her.

JEAN.

It would be vera strange if he did come, Miss. He's the kind that niver come back.

They wealthy young lads frae the big families; they dinna think onything o' forgettin' a lassie like her.

GERTRUDE.

Oh, but he couldn't be of good family.

JEAN.

Yes he could, Miss. I hae seen mony a poor lassie wooed and won—and then cast awa by the wayside like a tashed rosie!

And, by lads, o' the best families, too!

GERTRUDE.

(*Slowly and thoughtfully.*)

But, how can he stay away at such a time as this?

(RICHARD *opens hall door and enters; closes door quietly with right hand behind him. He is young, slight of build,*

with a kind, emotional countenance, features well formed, refined, even handsome, but showing plainly the effects of youthful recklessness and dissipation. His whole frame is tense, indicating the struggle for self-control.)

RICHARD.

Sister, dear!

GERTRUDE.

(*Turns, sees him, rushes to him.*)

Oh, Richard!

JEAN.

Guid afternoon, Mr. Raford.

RICHARD.

Good afternoon.

(*To* GERTRUDE, *taking her in his arms.*)

Is my little sister almost tired out?

GERTRUDE.

No, but I'm worried about a lot of things.

NURSE.

(*Appearing in doorway of sick room.*)

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

Will you come here a moment, please, Miss Gertrude?

GERTRUDE.

(*To Nurse.*)

Certainly.

(*To* RICHARD.)

I'll be back in just a moment, Richard.

(*Leaves him and exits to sick room.*)

(*Richard lays hat on table, nervously.*)

RICHARD.

(*To* JEAN.)

How is she?

JEAN.

Real badly, sir.

RICHARD.

Worse?

JEAN.

Yes, sir.

Ever since the bairnie was born.

RICHARD.

(*Breathlessly.*)

When?

JEAN.

Early this mornin', sir!

RICHARD.

A ——?

JEAN.

A laddie, sir.

(*Richard looks toward sick room door, grips hands, remains silent.*)

And tae think the faither has left her!

(*Pause.*)

I hae niver seen him, but I hae seen ithers like him and I hae seen mony lassies juist like her.

They aa' gang the same way.

I hae seen mair than one lassie travel that road.

It's aa' glitter at first, it's real bright most o' the way.

The dark disna come til the end.

But sooner or later they awa find they're oot o' the heather and into the thistles!

(DR. FAWTELL *enters.*)

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Advancing.*)

Richard!

(*To* JEAN.)

Miss Brainard needs you, Mrs. Cairns.

JEAN.

(*Going toward sick room.*)

How is she, Doctor?

DR. FAWTELL.

Very ill.

(JEAN *exits.*)

RICHARD.

(*Clutching* DR. FAWTELL'S *arm.*)

Dangerously?

DR. FAWTELL.

Yes.

RICHARD.

But there's a chance?

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Placing hand on* RICHARD'S *shoulder.*)

I'm afraid not.

RICHARD.

But there must be, Paul.
She must get well!

(*Pause.*)

Paul, she mustn't die!
She mustn't die!

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Looking nervously toward sick-room door.*)

Sh!—quietly!

Richard.

I want to do the right thing!
I must—I will do the right thing!
Paul, I'm going to marry her!

Dr. Fawtell.

No, no!
That'd be foolish, Richard!
Foolish!
It won't do any good now.

Richard.

But it's due her.

Dr. Fawtell.

But think of yourself.

Richard.

I've thought of that.
I've fought it all out.
It's the only decent thing to do!
(*Takes paper from inside pocket.*)
I've a marriage license!
I got it this morning!

Dr. Fawtell.

(*Looking directly at Richard.*)
A marriage license?

Richard.

Yes, and I'm going to marry her, I tell you!

Dr. Fawtell.

But that's rank folly, Richard.
Think of your mother, of Gertrude, the disgrace you'd bring upon both of them.
It wouldn't do any good, anyway.
She can't get well.

RICHARD.

But she may.

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Lights dim.*)

No, she can't.

RICHARD.

But she must!

We'll take her away from here!

To decent surroundings—where's there's good air, light, heat, sunshine!

DR. FAWTELL.

But she can't get well, Richard.

RICHARD.

Why not?

If we take her away from this hole, why can't she get well?

The chances are ten to one against her here!

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Slowly.*)

The chances are ten to one against her anywhere.

(*Lights dimmer.*)

She never had a fighting chance.

RICHARD.

What do you mean?

DR. FAWTELL.

She was striken from the first.

(*Room darker.*)

RICHARD.

Stricken——?

Dr. Fawtell.

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Don't you understand?

Richard.

(*Dazed.*)

No—What do you mean?

(*Room still darker.*)

Dr. Fawtell.

You know the life you've lived.
You know the condition you were in last year!

Richard.

Oh, my God, Paul!
You don't mean——?
You don't mean to tell me!

Dr. Fawtell.

Yes.

(*Richard sinks into chair.*)

(*Shoves license into right side lower coat pocket.*)

(*Pause.*)

Richard.

Poor little girl, poor little mother——!

(*Pause.*)

Paul?

Dr. Fawtell.

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Richard.

The little fellow!
Will it affect him also?

DR. FAWTELL.

I hope not.

RICHARD.

Does it usually affect the child?

DR. FAWTELL.

Sometimes.

RICHARD.

How?

DR. FAWTELL.

Progressive deterioration!

The hearing,—the eyes,—sometimes the brain.

RICHARD.

(*In half whisper.*)

Oh, my God, Paul! It's awful!

But I wasn't to blame! I wasn't to blame!

All the boys live the same life.

You're the only exception I know of.

We're led on by older men; they never seem to get in trouble!

I didn't know what I was doing.

Life has always been so easy.

I've never had to think of anything; I've never had to care for anything.

Life has been a gay time, money plentiful, time my own, and youth, health—everything to waste!

Oh, if I could undo the whole thing, all the wrong, all the misery, all the suffering!

I can't stop thinking about this thing! I can't sleep!

All night long, I think and think and think!

I can't think of anything but that poor girl in there.

You say she can't get well, Paul!

My God, she must get well, she must get well!

If she dies——!

I've been a selfish, heartless, lustful beast!

DR. FAWTELL.

You're selfish and—thoughtless, but you're good at heart.

RICHARD.

But I'm not, Paul.

My passion has ruined me. It's killing her!

DR. FAWTELL.

Come, come, Richard.

This is your test.

You can yet make a man of yourself.

Many a fellow has made a worse start.

Your life is only begun.

I know it's a hard lesson.

But the future is before you.

You can do with it what you please.

RICHARD.

Oh, Paul, if I only could! I want to. God knows I want to!

DR. FAWTELL.

You can.

Give up the life you're leading.

Determine to be of use in the world.

Prepare yourself for a profession—medicine or law, or something.

You have ability—capacity.

Think of your father.

Think of his career.
We've a right to expect big things of you?
(*Affectionately.*)
I'll help you, Richard.
I'll stand by you.
You'll make the fight, won't you?

RICHARD.

Yes, Paul, I'll try.
I'll do my best.

(*Room darker.*)

(*Footsteps are heard on the stairway and voices in the corridor. Door to rear opens and oil lamp on hall wall reveals two well dressed women.*)

(MISS LELAND *enters, followed by* MRS. RAFORD.)

(MISS LELAND *is an unmarried woman, thirty-five, dignified and distinguished in appearance. An aristocrat without a trace of snobbishness. The result of a thorough education and a sensible and highly perceptive mind.*)

(MRS. RAFORD, *her sister, and senior, well built, and good looking. The typical society matron, distinguished and highly aristocratic. Reserved after the manner of her station, but, with all, kind and sympathetic. Her perspective and executive faculties somewhat dulled by the*

forced submission to social routine, yet giving evidence of a remarkable power when once aroused to activity.)

Miss Leland.

But, my dear sister, the vote is not a privilege you should seek, but a right you should demand.

You're a taxpayer, and should have the right to vote.

Taxation without——

Mrs. Raford.

(*Impatiently.*)

But, my dear Mabel, I don't wish to vote.

The trustees take care of the estate and they vote.

(*Glances about apprehensively.*)

How dark it is here!

Have we made a mistake?

Dr. Fawtell.

Just a moment, Mrs. Raford, I'll light the lamp.

(*Strikes match, lights oil lamp on table.*)

Miss Leland.

Oh, is that you, Dr. Fawtell?

Dr. Fawtell.

(*Moving to medicine table.*)

Yes, we're sitting in the dark; sorry lamps were not lighted.

Very cold out, isn't it?

(*Lights another oil lamp.*)

Miss Leland.

Yes, very.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Coming forward, sees* RICHARD.)

Why, Richard, are you here?

RICHARD.

(*Hesitating.*)

Yes,—didn't you know?

MRS. RAFORD.

Oh, dear! Has Gertrude drawn you into this slum work, too?

RICHARD.

No, mother, I came down here with Paul.

MISS LELAND.

Where is the sick girl, Richard?

RICHARD.

In the other room.

(*Indicating sick room.*)

(NURSE *re-enters, goes to medicine table.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Coming forward and taking* RICHARD'S *arm.*)

Richard, Gertrude must come home with me. . . We can't allow her to stay in a place like this!

(MISS LELAND *moves toward medicine table, near* NURSE.)

RICHARD.

Why, mother——

She's helping——!

MRS. RAFORD.

The girl has a nurse; we can provide for her.

(MISS LELAND *quietly engages* NURSE *in conversation.*)

But there's no reason why Gertrude should remain!

(*Looks about room.*)

(*Inaudible conversation with* Richard.)

Miss Leland.

(*Quietly, on side to* Nurse.)

Is she very ill?

Nurse.

Yes, she can't live.

Miss Leland.

A baby?

Nurse.

This morning!

Miss Leland.

Husband here?

Nurse.

No, not married!

Miss Leland.

Who is the father?

Nurse.

I don't know.

(*Pause.*)

She's said nothing.

Miss Leland.

(*Looking about.*)

Cold here.

Nurse.

Very—only the stove.

Miss Leland.

(*Looking at* Mrs. Raford *and speaking to attract her attention.*)

Ten above zero and no heat except what comes from that old cook stove.

(*Exit* NURSE *to sick room.*)

RICHARD.

Criminal, isn't it?

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Self-protectingly.*)

But Richard——

MISS LELAND.

(*Sniffing about.*)

What an odor?

(*To* RICHARD.)

Is the plumbing defective?

RICHARD.

Yes, everything's defective!

(MRS. RAFORD *dazed.*)

MISS LELAND.

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

Defective lighting—defective ventilation—defective heating. It's all wrong—it's all wrong!

RICHARD.

Awful hole to live in!

MRS. RAFORD.

I never knew—the trustees never told me——

MISS LELAND.

Evidently, some one must look after them.

But then one can't blame them. They're men.

This

(*Looking about.*)

is not man's problem; it is woman's!

Once each woman was the keeper of her own home.

But now the rich own the homes of the poor and man has usurped woman's position as housekeeper!

What a mess a man would make trying to keep even one house in order!

How can one expect him to successfully regulate a hundred tenements!

It's preposterous!

Gertrude.

(*Re-entering quietly, interrupting.*)

Oh, mother!

I'm so glad you've come.

(*To* Miss Leland.)

Good evening, Aunt Mabel.

It was good of you to come with mother.

You'll help me convince her that something must be done to these old buildings, won't you?

Miss Leland.

I'll do everything I can, my dear.

Gertrude.

Think of living in a place like this!

Think of the sick girl there—think of the baby!

Miss Leland.

(*Cynically.*)

Babies born in places like this haven't much chance—everything is against them.

Gertrude.

Mother, dear, we must improve these someway!

All the tenements are as bad as this one—it's not right for us to collect rent on such buildings!

MRS. RAFORD.

But, Gertrude, these people can't afford anything better.

GERTRUDE.

Well, mother, we must do something!

MRS. RAFORD.

What can we do?

MISS LELAND.

Rebuild them if necessary.

MRS. RAFORD.

I do think something should be done.
I'll talk it over with the trustees.

MISS LELAND.

Aren't they acquainted with conditions?

MRS. RAFORD.

I don't know.

RICHARD.

Well, if they don't know of these conditions, we ought to know why they don't know.

They should be made to see things just as we are forced to see them.

GERTRUDE.

Indeed, they should!

RICHARD

Send for them, mother.
It's important; it's urgent!
I'll phone for them.

MRS. RAFORD.

What? Now?

RICHARD.

Yes, now!

MRS. RAFORD.

But they're probably at dinner.

RICHARD.

(*Impatiently.*)

Well, aren't you missing your dinner?

MISS LELAND.

I think you'd better send for them!

GERTRUDE.

Yes, mother, do.

RICHARD.

Shall I phone?

(MRS. RAFORD *quietly nods to* RICHARD.)

(RICHARD *goes to phone.*)

(*Into phone.*)

295 Plaza.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, 295 Plaza.

(*Pause.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* MOTHER.)

Is the car below, mother?

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, dear.

GERTRUDE.

Tell him we are sending the car, Richard.

RICHARD.

(*Over phone.*)

Hello, 295 Plaza?

(*Pause.*)

Mr. Farson, please.

(*Pause.*)

I know it's dinner hour, but I must speak with him.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, James.

This is Mr. Raford.

(*Pause.*)

Very well.

(*Pause.*)

Hello, Mr. Farson.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

This is Richard.

Mother's at the Tenth street tenements.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, Tenth street tenements!

Tenth—Street—Tenements!

She wants you to come down here at once.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, bring Mr. Coleman with you.

Can you get him on the phone?

(*Pause.*)

Oh, dining with you.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, it's important!

Very urgent.

(*Pause.*)

I can't explain over the phone, but mother must see you here at once.

(*Pause.*)

No, down here, number 741 Tenth street.
The third floor, rear.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, number 741.
Yes.

(*Pause.*)

We'll send the car for you.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, good-bye.

(*Hangs up receiver.*)

(*To* MOTHER.)

I'll tell Thomas to go for them.

(*Exits.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *in meditation.*)

MISS LELAND.

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

How is the baby?

GERTRUDE.

So bright and pretty!

MISS LELAND.

A girl?

GERTRUDE.

No, a little boy.
The dearest little thing!

(*To* MOTHER.)

Mother, you must see it.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Arousing herself from reverie.*)

See what?

GERTRUDE.

The baby!

It's the dearest——!

(*Exits to sick room, interrupting herself.*)

MISS LELAND.

I'm so glad you brought me down with you; it's really disagreeable, but I'm glad you've seen things as they are.

Men are not good housekeepers, you know.

MRS. RAFORD.

I'm quite overwhelmed; I didn't know things were so bad.

(JEAN, *followed by* GERTRUDE, *comes into room with baby in her arms.*)

(*Women group around it admiringly.*)

(RICHARD *re-enters quietly and watches scene.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* JEAN.)

Let me hold him! The little dear!

(*Takes child.*)

JEAN.

Be careful, Miss.

Dinna drop him.

It's a bonnie bairn.

God bless the wean!

GERTRUDE.

(*To* MOTHER.)

Isn't he the sweetest little thing!

JEAN.

It's like my ain darlin' bairnie o' lang ago come back again.

(*Pause.*)

He was sae wee.

(*Pause.*)

An' he deed!

(*Pause.*)

(*To the baby, pathetically smiling.*)

Ye're the dearest bairnie, ye darlin'!

GERTRUDE.

Mother, isn't he a darling?

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Smiling,*)

He is a dear little baby!

(*To* JEAN.)

You say the mother cannot live?

JEAN.

She's very ill, ma'am.

MISS LELAND.

Poor little fellow—no mother.

GERTRUDE.

And no father!

MRS. RAFORD.

What will become of him?

GERTRUDE.

That's just it, mother.

Miss Brainard says they'll send him to one of those horrid public institutions where there are hundreds of babies, all numbered and tagged and fed from bottles.

(GERTRUDE *coos at baby.*)

Think, mother, of sending this dear little thing to a place like that—where there are only nurses and attendants and no one to be a mother or father to him!

MRS. RAFORD.

But what else can be done?

JEAN.

I ha' heard tell o' guid families adoptin' them.

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, a home is the only place for a child!

GERTRUDE.

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

Do good families ever adopt them, mother?

MRS. RAFORD.

I suppose so.

MISS LELAND.

Quite often, I believe.

GERTRUDE.

(*Idea dawning.*)

Mother, can't I take him home?

I'd just love to——

JEAN.

And I'd come and work for ye and tak care o' him. 'Twould be the most happy moment—if ye'd allow o' it, Mistress Raford.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Astonished.*)

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

I don't think it's wise, Gertrude.

We know nothing of the mother—nor of the father, either.

(MRS. RAFORD *looks from one to another.*)
Is the father dead?
(*All hesitate.*)

MISS LELAND.

No one knows who the father is.

JEAN.

He naer has been heard of.

MRS. RAFORD.

And the girl's not a good girl?

MISS LELAND.

There are conditions which make it difficult for us to judge.

GERTRUDE.

(*Playfully to baby whom* JEAN *is carrying out.*)
Be a good little baby and don't cry.
If your mother goes far, far away, I'm going to take care of you.

JEAN.

(*To* GERTRUDE.)
Would yer nae tak me as well?
I could na stand to be left alone.
(JEAN *exits with baby.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

But certainly, there's no excuse for a girl going wrong!

RICHARD.

(*Coming forward*)
I don't think you understand, mother.
As Aunt Mabel says, there are conditions which make it almost impossible for a girl—

MRS. RAFORD.

But, Richard, she—

GERTRUDE.

(*Putting her arm about her mother.*)

Please don't, mother; please don't.

She's so kind and patient.

She's never complained at all—and she's so grateful for everything we do.

RICHARD.

Conditions were all against her—think of living in a place like this!

MRS. RAFORD.

A girl need not go wrong simply because she's poor!

MISS LELAND.

But there are many conditions which make it easy for a girl to go wrong; and there are some conditions which practically force girls into lives of shame. The police know that immorality increases when factories close and when cold weather comes.

All investigations show that when the wages of the girl are below the wages of a man, more girls go wrong than when the wages are equal.

Man has always been the hunter!

The savage mother dies to save her young, but the savage father sells his children into slavery and rents out his wife for gain!

This has passed now; but we still have slavery of the *other man's children,* and slavery of the other man's wife and daughters; the children are

in our mines, in our mills, in our factories, and the women in our stores, our cafes, and our brothels.

Society may plant rose bushes in ash barrels, but they can't bud roses there.

(*Voices are heard in the corridor. All turn toward exterior door.*)

Mr. Coleman.

(*Opening the door.*)

This is the third floor!

Mr. Farson.

(*Behind him, puffing loudly.*)

Well, it's a hell of a climb!

(*Coleman, a man of fifty-odd. Slender in build, with a smooth-shaven face and small stealthy eyes. His manner in company is quiet and he speaks with a practiced suavity that betrays a hidden cunningness. A trustee of the Raford estate.*)

Mr. Coleman.

(*Entering, seeing ladies, and advancing.*)

Oh, my dear Mrs. Raford!

How are you?

(*Farson, a large heavily built man of great physical strength. Features coarse and showing plainly the marks of early struggles; a jaw of great strength and determination. An example of a man, misguided by association, environment and lack of proper education.*)

MR. FARSON.

(*Advancing.*)

Good evening, Mrs. Raford.

MRS. RAFORD.

Good evening.

(MR. FARSON *and* MR. COLEMAN *nod to* GERTRUDE *and* RICHARD.)

MISS LELAND.

Good evening, Mr. Coleman; good evening, Mr. Farson.

MR. COLEMAN.

Good evening.

(MR. FARSON *nods to* MISS LELAND.)

Indeed, this is a surprise; I never expected to meet you all here.

Urgent matter, I presume?

MRS. RAFORD.

It's the buildings, the poor lighting, the poor sanitation, the vile odors, the lack of proper means of heating.

I had no idea such conditions existed anywhere; and here I find them on my own property.

(*Pause.*)

Why have you never told me of these conditions?

MR. COLEMAN.

But, my dear Mrs. Raford, don't you realize these are tenements?

The people who live here cannot afford to pay for anything better.

All tenements are alike.

RICHARD.

But these are not fit for any one to live in.

MR. FARSON.

But what can one do?

MISS LELAND.

Build new ones.

MRS. RAFORD.

Put in necessary improvements, at least!

MR. FARSON.

But, Mrs. Raford, it would take two years' income; perhaps three!

RICHARD.

What difference does that make compared to the life of even one tenant—think of the poor girl dying in there—living and dying in a hole like this!

MR. COLEMAN.

(*At last, realizing the cause of this great change.*)

Oh—I see!

MR. FARSON.

That's all very well, but you must consider the outlay.

These people are getting all they pay for.

MRS. RAFORD.

But the tenants can't keep well in a place like this.

MR. COLEMAN.

My dear Mrs. Raford, I fear the illness of this poor girl has unduly disturbed you.

Carefully consider the matter; I'm certain it will not be best to waste any large amount on these old buildings.

MRS. RAFORD.

Then we'll rebuild them.

MR. COLEMAN.

Of course, we shall be pleased to carry out your wishes, if it can be arranged.

MRS. RAFORD.

Thank you; I knew both of you would be glad to assist just as soon as you saw the need!

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

And now, Mabel, let us be going!

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

Won't you come with us Gertrude?

GERTRUDE.

No, mother; please don't insist!
Richard will stay and come with me later.

(MRS. RAFORD *and* MISS LELAND *move toward door.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

Very well.
Good-bye, dear.

(*To* RICHARD.)

Good-bye, Richard.

MISS LELAND.

Good night, Gertrude.

(*To* RICHARD.)

Good night.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* MR. COLEMAN *and* MR. FARSON.)

I thank you for coming here tonight.
I'll send my car right back for you.

MR. FARSON.

Thank you.

MR. COLEMAN.

Very kind of you.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*At door.*)

I'm going to inspect all of the buildings, tomorrow.

MR. COLEMAN.

It'll not be necessary; Mr. Farson and I will do so.

MR. FARSON.

We'll be glad to.

MRS. RAFORD.

But I feel I should also visit them.
There are several I have never seen.

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *exchange glances.*)

Call at ten in the morning and we'll go over them together.

(COLEMAN *looks at* FARSON.)

MR. FARSON.

Very well, Mrs. Raford, we'll come.

MRS. RAFORD.

Good night.

MISS LELAND.

Good night.

(*Exit* MRS. RAFORD *and* MISS LELAND.

(DOCTOR *enters.*)

(GERTRUDE *exits to sick room.*)

DR. FAWTELL.

Good evening, gentlemen.

MR. COLEMAN.

Good evening, doctor.

MR. FARSON.

Good evening, Paul.

MR. COLEMAN.

How is your patient, doctor?

DR. FAWTELL.

Very seriously ill—very!

(COLEMAN *and* DR. FAWTELL *talk near center,* FARSON *and* RICHARD *down stage left.*)

MR. FARSON.

(*Confidentially to* RICHARD, *patting him on shoulder.*)

Congratulations, my boy!

When's it coming off?

RICHARD.

What? When? I don't understand.

MR. FARSON.

No joking, now!

RICHARD.

Joking?

I don't know what you mean.

MR. FARSON.

You're a close one, Richard.

Came pretty near putting one over on us, all right, didn't you?

But I——

RICHARD.

I certainly don't know to what you refer.

(JEAN *enters unobserved, goes to* NURSE'S *table. Busies herself there.*)

MR. FARSON.

Oh, come boy—you know I'm around the City Hall a good deal.

I see about everything going on there.

(JEAN *listens.*)

RICHARD.

Well?

MR. FARSON.

Well, I just saw the record of your marriage license.

(RICHARD *starts, shoves right hand into outside coat pocket, then quickly controls himself.*)

(JEAN *shows she has heard.*)

Who is the happy girl? Name's strange to me.

RICHARD.

(*Indifferently.*)

Fear I'm the wrong party, Mr. Farson.

It's all news to me!

Perhaps it's some one else with a name like mine.

MR. FARSON.

Raford isn't a common name!

RICHARD.

Perhaps it's a joke some of my friends are playing on me.

MR. FARSON.

Perhaps.

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Coming up and interrupting.*)

I'm afraid Mrs. Raford's inspection will reveal worse conditions than these here.

(COLEMAN *and* FARSON *exchange glances.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Oh, no; I don't think so.

(RICHARD *leaves group and moves toward stove. Cautiously takes license from pocket, watches chance, and puts it into front of stove.*)

These are very fair tenements on the whole—considering that the people living in them pay almost nothing for rent.

Mrs. Raford's just worked up over this sick girl.

One can't provide model apartments at five a month.

(*The license does not catch fire. Richard takes poker to push it in further.*)

(JEAN *watches him.*)

MR. FARSON.

They're worth a damn sight more than they're paying for them.

NURSE.

(*At sick room door in agitated manner.*)

Doctor! Doctor!

(DR. FAWTELL *quickly exits to sick room, Richard drops poker and follows.*)

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *glance at sick room then move far down left.*)

(JEAN *goes to stove.*)

Mr. Farson.

Well, what are we going to do?

Mr. Coleman.

Why, it's nonsense to consider rebuilding, damn nonsense.

(Jean *takes poker; busies with poker as though opening and spreading crumpled-up paper. Looks toward sick room.*)

(*Conveys to audience that she understands. Shoves license up into stove with poker and watches it burn.*)

Mr. Farson.

Worse than that, woman's nonsense.

But what are we going to do?

(Jean *leaves stove; exits to sick room.*)

Mr. Coleman.

Well, the first thing to do is to prevent her finding out about the women in the tenements, south of Tenth street.

That's got to be kept dark.

If she gets on to that there will be something doing.

Mr. Farson.

Yes, you're right.

I'll see that she doesn't!

I'd better tip them off at once.

(*Goes to phone hurriedly.*)

(Coleman *watching* Farson *and sick room door.*)

(*Into phone.*)

Station 49.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Hello!

(*Pause.*)

McCaffery there?

(*Pause.*)

Connect up.

(*Pause.*)

Yes.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, it's Farson.

(*To* COLEMAN.)

McCaffery's the best man on the force.

Absolutely reliable.

(*Over phone.*)

Hello!

That you, Jim?

Farson.

(*Softly.*)

You know who Mrs. Raford is, don't you?

Well, she's caught the reform fever.

Raising a hell of a row about her tenements.

Going to inspect all of them tomorrow morning.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, all of them—those below Tenth street, too.

Say, Jim, tip off the word there tonight.

Have the women cover things up.

Everything must be O. K. by ten in the morning.

All right.

Good-bye.

(*Puts down receiver.*)

Jim'll turn those houses into Y. W. C. A.'s before morning.

Jim's a corker.

(*Pause.*)

The next thing to do is to rush our segregation bill through the council!

We've got to put it through before the Rafords know too much of the affairs down here.

The bill includes all of these tenements, doesn't it?

MR. COLEMAN.

Certainly, I drafted it that way purposely.

But isn't it rather risky just now?

Isn't there some way we can accomplish the result without definitely stating the limits of the district?

MR. FARSON.

I don't see how.

MR. COLEMAN.

You expect to be elected mayor next year, don't you?

MR. FARSON.

I'm dead certain of it—the machine's behind me!

MR. COLEMAN.

A mayor has power to select his own police commissioner, hasn't he?

Certainly.

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Meditatively.*)

Well, then, why not cut out all definite reference to this district and insert this phrase:

(*Slowly and deliberately.*)

"And any other district or districts which the mayor may deem wise to segregate."

MR. FARSON.

(*Thoughtfully.*)

How's that?

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Deliberately.*)

"And any other district or districts which the mayor may deem wise to segregate."

MR. FARSON.

(*Face lighting up.*)

That's great!

Coleman you're a genius!

I'll get word to Connors at once.

(*Goes to phone.*)

Worth 4290.

(*Pause.*)

Hello!

(*Pause.*)

Council Chamber?

Yes; give me Connors.

(*Pause.*)

Hello, Connors, we've got to put Bill 164 through tonight!

(*Pause.*)

Damn the risk!

It's got to go through tonight!

Line up the boys, but don't hand out the copies until I get down.

I'm going to make a change in the text.

That's all.

(*Hangs up receiver.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Did you notice how Richard backed up his mother tonight?

Pretty strong talk, that, about this being an awful hole to live in.

Seems mighty interested, doesn't he?

MR. FARSON.

His father was a fighter.

MR. COLEMAN.

Suppose he'll ever give us any trouble?

MR. FARSON.

No.

If he tries, we'll rake up something out of his past!

You can always find material if you want it.

He's been sowing wild oats pretty near two years now.

MR. COLEMAN.

But all this doesn't settle the rebuilding question.

MR. FARSON.

Oh, it'll blow over in time.

She's a woman, you know.

She's all up in the air now about that sick girl.

MR. COLEMAN.

Well, if Mrs. Raford thinks these buildings ought to be rebuilt, she'll rebuild them.

You never can tell what a woman will do when her sympathies are aroused.

(*As though getting a new idea.*)

Of course, better buildings mean higher class women, and bigger protection fees.

MR. FARSON.

But if it should ever come to a show down?

MR. COLEMAN.

Why, we'd decide the matter from a purely business viewpoint.

We are the trustees, aren't we?

We have the deciding votes—and thank God—*we're not women!*

(*A moan is heard, then slight sobbing.*)

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *look toward sick room door.*)

(DR. FAWTELL *enters; gestures* FARSON *and* COLEMAN *to go.*)

(GERTRUDE *enters, wiping her eyes, goes to right wall, puts on wraps.*)

(JEAN *enters carrying baby, and alternately sniffling and sobbing, quietly walks up stage.*)

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *recognizing situation take hats and exit.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* DR. FAWTELL.)

I'm going to take Mrs. Cairns and the baby home with me for a day or two, anyway.

(DR. FAWTELL *nods approval.*)

(GERTRUDE *goes up stage, puts on wraps. Bundles up* JEAN *and* BABY. JEAN *and* BABY *followed by* GERTRUDE *exit.*)

(Richard, *with head bowed, enters, comes to center stage, and sinks into chair by table.*)

(Dr. Fawtell *returns to sick room.*)

(Richard *lifts his head slowly and moves lips as though in prayer.*)

CURTAIN DESCENDS SLOWLY.

ACT II.

SEVEN YEARS LATER.

SCENE: *The library in the Raford town house. A spacious apartment, luxuriously and artistically furnished. The architecture is old Spanish. There are three entrance arches at back, revealing corridor with colored glass window alcove, with seats at back center.*

There is an arched window to either side of the large center arch. The left wall is also triple arched, each arch being a large French window looking out upon a formal garden. Book shelves fill all available space between the windows and arches. Half way front on right side, which is recessed, is a large open fire place and a large settee at right angles facing audience.

A large library table is far front to left of center, and a small writing table at left wall down stage. There are two arm chairs, one up stage right between center and right rear arches, the other down stage from table.

Another chair up stage left. In the left corner of the room there is a platform with chair and an easel with painting materials close by.

The tapestried walls, hangings, and heavy upholstery are all in brown and buff. The combined effect is one of pleasing harmony, richness and warmth—the result of discriminating personal taste.

GERTRUDE *is seated on stool before easel up stage left, engaged in touching up portrait.*

A loose bunch of roses lays by her side. She takes them up and smells them from time to time.

Sings softly to herself, "I Love You Truly."

DR. FAWTELL *appears in arch up stage right. Peeps through, sees* GERTRUDE, *stands admiring her and listening to her song. He then advances very softly down right side of stage and, approaching* GERTRUDE *from behind, places one hand on each arm.*

GERTRUDE.

(*Turning in surprise and looking up at him.*)

Oh, Paul!

If you don't stop such pranks, I'll have nervous prostration!

DR. FAWTELL.

Forgive me, dear.

(*Leans forward and kisses her on the forehead.*)

Did I frighten you so?

GERTRUDE.

(*With mock seriousness, rises.*)

Yes, you did.

Stealing up like a horrible dragon.

DR. FAWTELL.

I won't do it again, dear.

Don't be afraid; this horrid dragon has got to leave in just a minute.

GERTRUDE.

But you just came!

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Taking out his watch.*)

I know, dear, but I'm on my way to see a patient at eleven.

GERTRUDE.

(*Glancing at watch.*)

Why it's seven minutes to eleven.
You've oceans of time!

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Laughing and taking both her hands.*)
Soon we won't have to be so jealous of time.
(*Looks at her lovingly.*)
It's only two months away, dear.
(*Puts one arm about her.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*Looking shyly into his face.*)
Fifty-eight days.
I've counted them.

(MISS LELAND *enters from back right.*)

(GERTRUDE and DR. FAWTELL *turn to greet her.*)

Good morning, Aunt Mabel.

MISS LELAND.

Good morning, dear.

DR. FAWTELL.

Good morning, Miss Leland.
Splendid morning, isn't it?

MISS LELAND.

It's wonderful!

(RICHARD *enters in street costume, hat in hand. The nervous, reckless boy of seven years ago has developed into a dignified young man, his voice combining the ring of youthful enthusiasm with the firmness and confidence that comes with accomplishment.*)

RICHARD.

Why, hello, everyone!

Hello, Paul!
Hello, Aunt Mabel!
Is this a Monday morning club meeting?

Dr. Fawtell.

Yes, and you're elected a member on the spot.

Richard.

Sorry, but I can't stay for initiation.

Gertrude.

Richard's always in a rush!
It's awful to have a brother who's a doctor and a lawyer and a social reformer as well!
He might be a stranger for all we see of him.

Miss Leland.

And it may become worse; I think he's heading straight for politics.

Richard.

(*Negatively.*)
No—No!
No politics for me.
I'm not the kind the grafters want.

Dr. Fawtell.

You're just the kind they *need!*

Richard.

I'm afraid of politics.
I'm having the time of my life keeping out of it.
(*Phone rings.*)
(*Goes to phone.*)
(*Into phone.*)
Hello!
(*Pause.*)
Yes.
(*Pause.*)

Yes.

Oh, the Dewey Reform League!

Tomorrow night.

I'm sorry, but I can't do it.

(*Pause.*)

No, it's impossible.

(*Pause.*)

No, I've two engagements to speak tomorrow night already.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, before the Medical Association and before the Economic League!

Very well, but it's quite impossible; every night taken for two weeks.

(*Pause.*)

Good-bye.

(*Puts down receiver.*)

(*To others.*)

My! but there's a lot to do in the world!

(*Enter* JEAN.)

JEAN.

Mr. Richard.

RICHARD.

What is it, Jean?

JEAN.

Dr. Thomas phones he'll stop to see you in about ten minutes.

RICHARD.

Oh, yes, about the Children's Clinic.

I had almost forgotten it!

(JEAN *starts to exit.*)

A moment, Jean.

(*Writes on telegraphic blank.*)

Take this telegram to Parker!

Have him send it at once!

(*Exit* JEAN.)

Had to cancel my Boston lecture on "City Sanitation," can't get away.

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

Where's mother?

GERTRUDE.

In the garden.

(*To* MISS LELAND, *who starts toward garden doors.*)

I'll tell mother you're here, Aunt Mabel. She did not expect you so soon.

MISS LELAND.

Thank you, dear.

(GERTRUDE *starts toward garden doors.*)

(DR. FAWTELL *turns to* MISS LELAND, *looks at watch.*)

DR. FAWTELL.

I must go, I've a patient at eleven.

(*To* GERTRUDE.)

I'll go out through the garden.

RICHARD.

(*Smiling.*)

Is your patient in the garden?

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Laughing.*)

Perhaps!

(*To* MISS LELAND *and* RICHARD.)

Good-bye.

(GERTRUDE *and* DR. FAWTELL *exit.*)

RICHARD.

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

Well, Aunt Mabel, how's the Woman's Cause progressing?

MISS LELAND.

Splendidly!

We expect big things this year.

Richard, there's going to be a political re-adjustment very soon.

RICHARD.

Yes, I know it's coming, but I hardly think it will reach us this year.

MISS LELAND.

I don't know. The reform element is waking up.

You ought to identify yourself with them, Richard.

RICHARD.

(*Laughingly.*)

No, I'm not a politician, besides I can't actively oppose the present administration. Farson's mayor, and he's been a friend of our family for thirty years.

(*Pause.*)

Besides, I've my medicine. Have you seen this?

(*Hands her a pamphlet.*)

A report for the International Association in October.

(MISS LELAND *takes the pamphlet.*)

JEAN.

(*Entering.*)

Dr. Thomas is waiting to see you, Mr. Richard.

RICHARD.

I'll be right down, Jean.

DICK.

(*A bright, attractive, though highly nervous child, seven years old. He bounds in joyously from up right and runs to* RICHARD.)

Oh, Mr. Richard, won't you come with me, I'm going to feed the bunnies! Won't you come!

RICHARD.

I can't now—Dr. Thomas is waiting for me, but I'll be right back. Run on now, my boy.

MISS LELAND.

Good morning, Dick. Are the bunnies well?

DICK.

Oh, they're fine!

(*Running off to garden.*)

I've got to feed 'em.

(*Exits.*)

MISS LELAND.

Isn't he a darling little fellow! One would never think he was a slum child! He's as refined as though his parents had been cultured people. Isn't it strange how fond we all are of him?

RICHARD.

Not at all. But I must go. Back soon.

MISS LELAND.

Very Well. I'll read your report while I'm waiting.

(RICHARD *exits.*)

(MISS LELAND *seats herself in alcove back of corridor.*)

(JEAN *busies herself about room, begins humming "I Knew a Lassie." As she continues arranging things, she forgets* MISS LELAND'S *presence and gradually changes from humming to singing; this in turn, leads to slight imitation of Harry Lauder's steps and body gestures.*)

(*A laugh from* MISS LELAND *makes* JEAN *realize where she is and what she is doing.*)

JEAN.

(*Obviously embarrassed.*)

Ye must forgive me, Miss Leland. I'm sae happy about Mr. Richard. He's such a great man. There's nae reason he may not be governor some day.

MISS LELAND.

(*Laughing.*)

I'm sure Richard's going to be a great man.

JEAN.

(*Almost petulantly.*)

Ye need nae say that. He's a great man noo. I see his name in the papers, "the noted young Dr. Raford, son of the late Governor Raford." And it's nice things the papers be a saying of him.

Miss Leland.

Yes, the papers have been very kind to Richard. But the papers are controlled by political organizations, and let Richard but once begin a fight for reform and you'll find the papers will have plenty of disagreeable things to say.

Jean.

They would nae say bad things about Mr. Richard.

They would nae be true.

Miss Leland.

That makes no difference, Jean.

Any man who enters public life to fight for the right is always slandered by his opponents. They search into every year of his past life, and if there's nothing for which they can condemn him, they make up something.

Jean.

(*Fear in her face.*)

Do they hunt up every bad thing a man has done in the past?

Miss Leland.

Indeed they do.

Jean.

And do they print it?

Miss Leland.

Most certainly.

Jean.

Even if it's lang, lang ago?

Miss Leland.

Yes, if they can get any record or trace of it.

(*Men's voices are heard, coming from left.*)

(JEAN *resumes her work in silence.*)

(MAYOR FARSON *and* COLEMAN *enter through left arch up stage carrying papers, reports, etc. They do not see* MISS LELAND *and come forward to table.*)

JEAN.

(*Bowing.*)

Good mornin' to ye, sirs.

MR. COLEMAN.

Good morning, Jean.

MR. FARSON.

Good morning.

(JEAN *exits up right, nodding to* MISS LELAND *as she passes the alcove, but saying nothing to indicate* MISS LELAND'S *presence there.*)

(*Looking over papers and then about room, to make sure they are alone.*)

How did the inspection stunt come off yesterday?

(MISS LELAND *listens.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Splendidly!

Everybody satisfied.

Richard, Gertrude, Miss Leland, Mrs. Raford were delighted with everything.

I took them down just before lunch, you know.

MR. FARSON.

Hope everything was quiet. I put McCaffrey wise.

Told him to tip off the women so they'd have everything ship shape.

(MISS LELAND *listening intently.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

He looked after it all right.

MR. FARSON.

(*Looking over papers.*)

We can make a pretty good report with these figures.

Mighty good income now.

Good class of women.

Rent is always ready and never any kick on the police fee.

They're the kind of women who know good protection when they get it!

(MISS LELAND *intense.*)

We've got to make another raise though.

We've got to have fifty thousand for campaign expenses.

MR. COLEMAN.

Can't we raise it some other way?

MR. FARSON.

I've tried—can't do it.

MR. COLEMAN.

You're safe for re-election anyway.

As yet, there's no one even mentioned against you.

MR. FARSON.

There's going to be a fight though.

The reformers are getting busy.

Since the petticoats started their newspaper they've made a devil of a howl!

MR. COLEMAN.

But women are women—they have no vote.

MR. FARSON.

But, damn it, they talk! that always costs votes!

(RICHARD *singing, "When Love Is Young in Springtime," is heard approaching.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Sh'h!

RICHARD.

(*Entering.*)

(MISS LELAND *still unobserved.*)

Hello, Mr. Mayor!

Good morning, Coleman.

Got the reports ready?

MR. COLEMAN.

Yes, Richard, everything's here.

MR. FARSON.

(*Handling papers.*)

We think it's a remarkable showing.

(*Seat themselves about table.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Mighty few are able to rebuild their tenements without touching the original capital.

(*Looking at papers.*)

These are the figures up to May first.

RICHARD.

(*Picking up some of the papers.*)

It certainly is remarkable.

I can hardly believe it.
It's extraordinary!

MR. FARSON.

Yes, for the first quarter.

RICHARD.

(*Looking at papers.*)
I see—one hundred and forty thousand.
Whew!
Why that's about——
(*Stops to think*)
seventeen per cent on the investment.
That's enormous!

MR. FARSON.

Well, we're getting mighty good rents now.

RICHARD.

We must be.
(*Pause.*)
Are we crowding out the old tenants by the new rents?
We rebuilt to give the poor people decent homes, you know.

MR. COLEMAN.

Of course there've been changes—old tenants are moving out, new tenants are moving in, but I don't think it's due to change in rents.

RICHARD.

What are the new rates?
(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *exchange glances.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

Well, they vary, somewhat.

RICHARD.

Aren't they uniform?

MR. FARSON.

No—o, not exactly.

The rent depends upon location.

RICHARD.

But mother and I instructed you to make them uniform.

MR. COLEMAN.

But we found that impracticable.

RICHARD.

(*Looking toward file of papers.*)

Where is the rate sheet?

MR. FARSON.

I haven't it here.

RICHARD.

But I asked you especially to bring it.

MR. FARSON.

It's just a mass of figures—limitless detail; the agents attend to the rent variations, anyway.

RICHARD.

Well, what's the average rent?

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Hesitatingly.*)

I couldn't say, off hand.

RICHARD.

Well, about what?

MR. FARSON.

I can't tell.

RICHARD.

We can strike an average right here.

(*Takes paper and pencil.*)

One hundred forty thousand a quarter; about ten thousand tenants.

That brings it to about twelve dollars a tenant.

Good Lord man!

They're not all paying that rate.

Mr. Farson.

Oh, no—but there're certain rooms that bring up the average.

Richard.

Rooms!

I thought we were renting only to families!

Mr. Farson.

But you can't shut out certain men and women simply because they have no families.

Richard.

But why should single tenants pay that rate?

There's only one class of people I know of would pay that rate down there—women plying their trade.

(*Looking straight at trustees.*)

There are no women of ill fame housed in our properties, are there?

Mr. Farson.

I don't see how there could be without my knowing it.

Mr. Coleman.

It's not in the segregated district, you know.

Richard.

No, it isn't—that's true.

(Miss Leland *rises and comes forward a few steps, as though she intended to join the conversation.*)

(*Voices are heard in the garden.*)

(*She pauses.*)

(*Garden doors at middle left open.*)

(LITTLE DICK *rushes in, runs across the room—turns, sees* RICHARD, *runs to him, and as* MRS. RAFORD *and* GERTRUDE *enter from the garden, the little fellow catches* RICHARD'S *hands and dances around him.*)

(MISS LELAND *comes forward,* GERTRUDE *sings a measure from "Ring Around a Rosie."*)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Nodding to all, speaking to* MISS LELAND.)

Isn't it a beautiful morning?

Dick carried us off to the garden almost before we'd had our breakfast.

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *look at* MISS LELAND, *nod to her and inquiringly glance at each other.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

I'm so glad to see you, Mr. Coleman and Mayor Farson!

You're early callers!

But Aunt Mabel is ahead of you!

(*Mock whisper.*)

Planting suffrage seeds—early in the morning—before breakfast!

(*Melodramatically.*)

Beware of her!

Mr. Farson.

(*To* Miss Leland.)

We're hopeless!
Don't waste time on us.

Miss Leland.

(*Coldly, yet confidently.*)

My morning has not been wasted!

(Farson *and* Coleman *again exchange glances.*)

Richard.

(*To* Mrs. Raford.)

Excuse me, mother, I must do some 'phoning.

(*To* Dick.)

I'll be right back, Dick! Just as soon as I can! Good-bye!

(Richard *exits.*)

(Gertrude *arranges flowers brought from garden.*)

Dick.

(*Nervous and pale, buoyant, yet fretful, goes to* Gertrude *and takes her hand.*)

(Mrs. Raford *moves down stage right.*)

Miss Gertrude.

Gertrude.

Yes, dear.

Dick.

Paint me some more now.

Gertrude.

No, dear, not now.

(*In mock whisper.*)

There are too many watching us!

DICK.

(*Pleading.*)

Paint me some more now; please, Miss Gertrude.

Paint me some more.

(COLEMAN *and* FARSON *talk.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *seats herself down stage right.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*Takes* DICK'S *hand and smiles.*)

Wait till the others go, dear.

DICK.

No, now.

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

You don't care if Miss Gertrude paints me now, do you?

(MRS. RAFORD *smiles.*)

GERTRUDE.

Oh, you little rogue!

You'll enlist everyone on your side; I'll give in.

(LITTLE DICK *dances about, claps his hands. He then jumps into big chair and arranges himself, poses and reposes.*)

MISS LELAND.

(*Down stage.*)

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

How wonderfully attractive Dick is!

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, and such a remarkable child—I'm glad I gave in to Gertrude's pleading and allowed her to bring the little fellow here.

We've all grown very fond of him.
He's been the joy of the house all these years.

(GERTRUDE *takes paint box of tubes, pallette and brushes and begins work.*)

(FARSON *up stage right going over papers.*)

(MISS LELAND *standing to one side of platform.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *alone, seated down stage right, greatly admiring little* DICK.)

(COLEMAN *moves up stage left near arch, intently studying both little* DICK *and portrait* GERTRUDE *is painting.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

You have great ability, Gertrude, in getting flesh tints.

MISS LELAND.

(*Crossing over to* GERTRUDE *and getting near child.*)

A remarkable likeness!

MR. COLEMAN.

There's a strange familiarity in that portrait, a familiarity as of some other face I've known in the past.

GERTRUDE.

(*Looking up.*)

I have felt that, too!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Laughing.*)

Oh, the fantasies of an artistic imagination!

(*Rises and comes toward* DICK.)

But I'm very proud of Gertrude's work.

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

Have you seen her latest miniature, Mabel?

MISS LELAND.

No, I haven't.

(MRS. RAFORD *takes miniature from wall window, pats* DICK'S *head, then walks towards* MISS LELAND, *left center, and hands her miniature.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

It's of Richard?

MISS LELAND.

(*Looking at it.*)

Why, dear, you're a genius; it's the best you've ever done!

(*Hands miniature to* COLEMAN, *who is holding out his hand for it.*)

(*He holds it meditatively in his hands while* MRS. RAFORD *and* MISS LELAND *come down stage left.*)

(LITTLE DICK'S *body relaxes—a very tired, pathetic attitude.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

It's beautiful work, Gertrude.

A really wonderful likeness!

(LITTLE DICK *puts hands on head several times, as though in pain.*)

GERTRUDE.

That's encouraging from you.

I know you're a connoisseur.

(COLEMAN *alternately glances from miniature to portrait several times.*)

Mr. Coleman.

There's a certain wistfulness in little Dick's eyes that's very similar to the unfathomable depths of Richard's eyes.

Gertrude.

Yes, they both have remarkable eyes—quite wonderful—I've often noticed that.

(Coleman *further compares portrait and miniature.*)

Mrs. Raford.

Such unhesitatingly frank eyes!

Mr. Coleman.

There's a certain expression about the mouth that is also very similar!

Have you ever noticed it, Mrs. Raford?

Miss Leland.

Indications of a similar reserve strength.

Mrs. Raford.

(*Looking toward portrait, a second; then collecting herself.*)

I've never noticed it before.

(*Pause.*)

It's no wonder, though.

Richard is so fond of Dick and Dick adores Richard.

Is'nt it strange how those who love each other grow to look like each other.

(*Slight—very slight—tired moan from* Dick.)

(Coleman *replaces miniature and walks to right in reverie.*)

Are you tired, Dick?

DICK.

(*Sighing, but smiling bravely.*)

Oh, no——o!—not very.

(*Pause.*)

(*A glance at* GERTRUDE *makes* DICK *sit up bravely and smile, pretending not to be fatigued.*)

MISS LELAND.

I've just read Richard's treatise on "Compulsory Sanitation."

It's splendid.

MRS. RAFORD.

Here's a paper he's to read before the Economic Society tomorrow night.

(*Hands* MISS LELAND *typewritten manuscript from table.*)

DICK.

Miss Gertrude.

GERTRUDE.

Yes, dear.

DICK.

Mrs. Raford's your mama; isn't she?

GERTRUDE.

Yes, dear.

DICK.

Who's my mama?

GERTRUDE.

You haven't one, dear.

DICK.

Why haven't I a mama?

Didn't I ever have a mama?

Gertrude.

Yes, dear.

Dick.

Where is she?

Gertrude.

She's gone away.

Dick.

Where'd she go to?

Gertrude.

To heaven, my dear.

(*Changing subject.*)

Now you must sit still if I'm to paint you.

(Dick *is silent a moment.*)

Dick.

But, Miss Gertrude, I want to know!

Gertrude.

Do be quiet, Dick; we'll have to stop painting, if you don't!

(*Pause.*)

Miss Leland.

(*Looking up from manuscript.*)

Richard's going to be a great man.

Mrs. Raford.

Yes, he's doing splendidly in both medicine and law.

Miss Leland.

But he's going to be more than that; he's going to be a leader of men.

(*Interest on part of* Farson, *who listens.*)

(Miss Leland *narrowly watches him while talking.*)

His father led the forces against Tweed.

Richard's the same type.
All he needs is a cause to lead.
When the call comes, he'll be ready.

MRS. RAFORD.

Do you really think so?

MISS LELAND.

Yes, indeed, I do!
Such men are made in an hour, and there's no telling how soon Richard may be called to lead a reform movement.

(RICHARD *at this moment enters from rear center.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *rises and moves toward center.*)

DICK.

Oh, Mr. Richard—Mr. Richard!

(RICHARD *turns toward* DICK, *who jumps from position into* RICHARD'S *arms.*)

Oh, Mr. Richard!
I'm so glad you didn't stay long!

(*Boyishly, affectionately,* DICK *flings his arms about* RICHARD'S *neck and gives him a bear hug.*)

RICHARD.

(*To* MOTHER.)

I've just had a 'phone from the Fire Commissioner. He says our new tenements have the most efficient fire escapes in the city.

MRS. RAFORD.

Isn't that splendid; I'm so glad!

(FARSON *winks at* COLEMAN.)

(RICHARD *and* DICK *move down stage right, and take chair formerly occupied by* MRS. RAFORD.)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

I'm so indebted to both of you for your conscientious help!

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

You see, dear, what wonders men can work.

MISS LELAND.

(*Coldly.*)

Yes, but 'twas woman's ideal and woman's decision that brought about the change.

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, but the rebuilding—they've carried it out so satisfactorily—so efficiently—so economically.

MR. FARSON.

Woman may suggest, but man's the one to do things.

It's his business to look out for her, and protect her interests.

MISS LELAND.

(*Watching him closely.*)

Yes, but I've come to the conclusion that he usually looks out for himself first.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* FARSON.)

Let Miss Leland see the rebuilding report.

MR. FARSON.

It's all been accomplished without touching the capital.

(FARSON *hands* MISS LELAND *the papers. all group about them.*)

(COLEMAN *has refrained from entering conversation, stands alone far up center, studies portrait,* RICHARD *and little* DICK.)

DICK.

Mr. Richard!

RICHARD.

Yes, my boy.

DICK.

Miss Gertrude said I had a mama once.

RICHARD.

(*Hesitatingly.*)

Yes, my boy!

DICK.

(COLEMAN *standing near miniature, again takes it for a second or two.*)

What was her name?

RICHARD.

Winifred.

DICK.

(*Smiling.*)

And I had a papa, too, didn't I?

RICHARD.

Yes.

(RICHARD *is silent and thoughtful.*)

DICK.

Is he in heaven, too?

(RICHARD *bends and kisses* DICK'S *forehead.*)

(Coleman *quietly walks over to back of* Richard *and* Dick.)
(*Hears close of conversation.*)

Dick.

Where is my papa?

Richard.

(*Showing agitation.*)
Oh, he's probably around somewhere!

Dick.

Why don't he come to see me?
I want a papa!

Richard.

He may come sometime.

Dick.

(*Silent a moment.*)
(*Then pathetically.*)
I don't want him to come.
I want you for my papa!
(Richard, *greatly moved, remains silent and affectionately embraces boy.*)
(Coleman *studies portrait intently, indicates that he sees a resemblance.*)

Gertrude.

Aren't the kindergarten rooms splendid?
(Coleman *advances, smiling.*)

Miss Leland.

Yes.
(*Pause.*)
How many children have you in the kindergarten?

(DR. FAWTELL *is seen by those on stage, tip-toes along back corridor—gestures to* GERTRUDE.)

GERTRUDE.

Only a few now.

The new tenants haven't as many children as our old tenants had.

(DR. FAWTELL *attracts* GERTRUDE'S *attention and beckons her off.*)

(*She nods.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

The better type of people have fewer children.

(*Direct challenging look from* MISS LELAND.)

(RICHARD *rises, little* DICK *goes up to divan and then curls up.*)

(GERTRUDE *steals away to left arch up stage, joins* DR. FAWTELL *and exits left.*)

MISS LELAND.

(*Deliberately and meaningly.*)

I understand!

RICHARD.

And the clinic rooms are models of their kind!

MISS LELAND.

(*Looking straight at* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

Richard ought to make a practical application of his belief in compulsory sanitation.

RICHARD.

I'm going to—sometime.

Miss Leland.

Why don't you try it out in the tenements?

Mrs. Raford.

It's an excellent idea!

Richard.

Just the thing!

Mr. Farson.

Unnecessary!

The city has a system of Health Inspection!

Miss Leland.

But it's a special inspection we're speaking of.

Model supervision of model tenements.

Special compulsory inspection to keep them in the best sanitary condition!

Mr. Coleman.

(*Realizing the situation.*)

Yes, yes, I suppose you are right, but——

(*Pause.*)

(*Winking at* Farson.)

Let the city take care of this situation.

Mr. Farson.

Yes, I'll appoint someone.

Miss Leland.

Who have you in mind?

Mr. Farson.

Oh, I don't know now—

Some young graduate out of a job.

Miss Leland.

But the position demands a man of practical training.

Why not appoint Richard?

MR. FARSON.

(*Taken aback.*)

Richard?

MISS LELAND.

Yes.

(*Little* DICK *sits up on the divan and listens.*)

RICHARD.

(*Coming forward, delighted with the idea.*)

Exactly what I want, Mayor!

I'm tired of studying.

I'm eager for real work.

This is just the kind of work I want, and I believe I'm fully qualified for it.

(FARSON *silent.*)

(*Eagerly.*)

Yes, yes, he certainly is.

(MAYOR *silent.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Very suavely.*)

While Richard is fitted for the work, I doubt if the Mayor should appoint him.

Richard has no need of the salary, and it is the Mayor's duty to give the position to someone who needs it.

MR. FARSON.

Mr. Coleman is right.

I'd be greatly criticised if I appointed Richard to a salaried position.

RICHARD.

I don't want the salary—give it to the city's poor!

But, I do want the position!

I want to get into real work, and here's my chance.

You'll give me the appointment, won't you?

Mrs. Raford.

Of course, Richard; Mayor Farson will appoint you.

(*Little* Dick's *attitude varies from most intense interest to apparent exhaustion, changing from moment to moment to end of act.*)

Mr. Farson.

But—Richard—is—hardly—the man for the position!

Mrs. Raford.

(*Surprised and somewhat indignant.*)

Not the man for the position?

I don't understand you.

He's fitted for the work in every way.

He knows conditions as they are, and what ought to be done.

He has made a special study of hygiene.

Moreover, he has character, position and means.

He is well known, and the common people have confidence in him.

I can't conceive of any possible reason why he should not be appointed!

Mr. Farson.

I acknowledge Richard's technical fitness—but there are always two sides to every question.

MRS. RAFORD.

But not this one!

(FARSON *does not reply.*)

MISS LELAND.

(*To* FARSON *and* COLEMAN.)

Yes, there is another side!

You're afraid of Richard!

(*Exchange of glances between* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

(MRS. RAFORD *looks interrogatively at* MISS LELAND.)

MRS. RAFORD.

Afraid of Richard?

RICHARD.

Of me?

MRS. RAFORD.

I can't understand my sister's remark; but I do understand that you refuse Richard this position, and I demand an explanation.

MR. COLEMAN.

My dear Mrs. Raford, I am fully acquainted with the conditions, and I assure you the Mayor is acting solely to protect your interests.

MISS LELAND.

(*To* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

He is acting solely to protect your own interests and you know it.

(*Both* FARSON *and* COLEMAN *startled.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

Mabel, what do you mean?

Tell me!

MR. COLEMAN.

My dear Mrs. Raford, I'm surprised——

Mr. Farson.

Miss Leland's mistaken—misinformed!

Mrs. Raford.

(*Turning to* Farson.)

Won't you please explain, then?

Mr. Farson.

(*Angrily—at bay.*)

There's nothing to explain!

Miss Leland.

(*To* Farson.)

But there's something my sister must know.

(*To* Mrs. Raford.)

I felt I knew why these men first opposed your plans to rebuild.

I felt I knew why their opposition changed to approval.

I felt I knew why they raised the rents; but until today, until an hour ago, I was not certain, so I've kept still; I've said nothing.

But now I know, and I'm going to tell you!

Mr. Farson and Mr. Coleman have private interests. Richard, as Health Inspector, would discover what they are!

My dear, they're deceiving you, and they've deceived us for years!

Mrs. Raford.

Deceived us?

I don't understand; I can't conceive what you mean.

MISS LELAND.

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

It's seven years since you first decided to rebuild the tenements, isn't it?

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes.

MISS LELAND.

Mr. Farson and Mr. Coleman were first opposed to the rebuilding, were they not?

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes.

MISS LELAND.

It was a year before they agreed to your plans, wasn't it?

RICHARD.

Yes! A whole year was wasted.

MISS LELAND.

(*To* FARSON.)

You agreed to Mrs. Raford's plans just as soon as you were elected Mayor, didn't you?

MR. FARSON.

Well?

MISS LELAND.

Why didn't you approve plans before that time?

MR. COLEMAN.

The affairs of the estate were not in shape.

MISS LELAND.

Yes, I've heard that statement before, but wasn't there another reason?

MR. FARSON.

None, absolutely none!

Miss Leland.

(*To* Mrs. Raford.)

Were you not told that your old tenants were leaving because they did not appreciate the improvements you were installing?

Richard.

Yes! Yes!

Miss Leland.

Did not this change of tenants begin immediately after Mr. Farson was elected Mayor?

Mrs. Raford.

I can't remember.

Richard.

(*Looking away, as though figuring up time.*)

Yes,—just about that time!

Miss Leland.

Richard, do you remember that a Segregation Bill passed the Council just before Mr. Farson's election?

Richard.

Yes, yes, I remember.

Miss Leland.

Do you remember the designated districts?

Richard.

Yes, Yes!

I remember them distinctly.

Miss Leland.

The Tenth street tenements were not included in any of those districts, were they?

Richard.

No.

MISS LELAND.

(*To* FARSON.)

After designating the districts, did not the bill include a phrase, as follows: "And any other district or districts which the Mayor may deem wise to segregate?"

MR. FARSON.

Yes, but what of it?

MISS LELAND.

Did you not privately apply this to Mrs. Raford's tenements, just as soon as you were elected Mayor?

MRS. RAFORD.

Tell me, tell me, are you certain of this?
Do you know?

MR. FARSON.

She knows nothing—it's mere supposition!

RICHARD.

(*To* FARSON.)

I'm not so sure!

MISS LELAND.

(*To* FARSON.)

You can't evade it; you can't deny it!

(*Little* DICK *on very edge of divan, very tense.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

There's nothing to evade; there's nothing to deny!

MISS LELAND.

(*To* FARSON.)

Did you not by private order segregate vice in Mrs. Raford's tenements?

(*Pause.*)

Were not women of ill fame compelled to move there or suffer arrest?

(*Pause.*)

(*Astonishment on face of* Mrs. Raford.)

Were not the police instructed to protect these women, and collect protection fees?

(*Pause.*)

Did not a part of these fees go into your pockets?

Mr. Farson.

(*To* Miss Leland, *furiously.*)

No—no—no!

Mere assumption!

Mere rot!

Miss Leland.

Do you dare deny, that less than an hour ago, in this very room, both of you conspired to raise in the same way, fifty thousand extra campaign money for Mr. Farson's re-election?

(*Silence.*)

(Richard *very tense.*)

(Mrs. Raford *gradually recovers herself as the wrong of the entire thing grows upon her.*)

Richard.

(*White and tense with anger.*)

My God, men!

Can't you speak?

(*Pause.*)

Is it true?

(*Little* DICK'S *eyes staring, hands clenched and unclenched—very nervous.*)

MR. FARSON.

(*At bay.*)

It's all rot!

It's all rot!

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

You can't prove I ever collected one single cent as protection money!

You——you——!

MR. COLEMAN.

(*More calmly.*)

Don't credit mere heresay accusation.

MRS. RAFORD.

It is true!

It is true!

I see it in your faces!

(FARSON *and* COLEMAN *both attempt to speak, but* MRS. RAFORD *silences them with a gesture. The daze seems to pass from her, and she turns upon* FARSON *with vehemence.*)

(*To* FARSON.)

My father picked you up as a little boy out of the streets, and gave you a chance in life.

He trusted you to manage my estate for me—and in payment of this trust you segregate vice in my properties; your police compel women of ill fame to live in my tenements—you collect fees for protecting these women, and put the gain into your own pocket.

But I will not stand it!

I will not stand it!

I will fight you.

I will appeal to the courts; I will demand that new trustees be appointed!

I will demand the segregation act be repealed!

I will not be forced by law to be the owner of houses of prostitution!

MR. COLEMAN.

But, Miss Leland has no proof.

MRS. RAFORD.

I need no proof!

There is something within myself—something that convinces me that the charge is true. And I shall act upon that conviction—I'll have the courts remove you!

MR. FARSON.

No court will remove us as trustees, because your tenements are in a segregated district.

And my Council won't repeal an act which we believe to be for the best interests of the community at large!

RICHARD.

Then we'll have a new Mayor.

We'll call upon every decent man to defeat you for re-election!

We'll elect a man of honor, integrity and uprightness—a man who does not live on the wages of prostitutes!

MR. FARSON.

(*Determinedly.*)

I've got the election machinery in my hands. I'll break any man you put up.

RICHARD.

(*With equal determination.*)

We will find a man who is neither afraid of you nor your political organization—one who'll defeat you and smash the machine!

MR. FARSON.

Who?

RICHARD.

We'll find one!

MR. FARSON.

Who?

Who'd try it?

Name your man!

MISS LELAND.

(*Vehemently interrupting.*)

I know the man.

I've watched him develop.

He has youth; he has strength; he has wealth; he has position; he knows the needs of the city's poor; the people trust him; he is untainted by political corruption; he is not afraid of you nor your infamous machine; he is courageous and a fighter—the son of the man who overthrew Tweed.

Richard Raford will run against you!

(RICHARD *at first overwhelmed; facial expression shows very rapid change of thought—then decision.*)

(COLEMAN *cynical.*)

(MAYOR FARSON *disgusted.*)

(*Little* DICK *gripping and ungripping edge of divan; seemingly almost on verge of child hysteria.*)

MR. FARSON.

Huh!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* RICHARD.)

(*Face lighting interestingly.*)

Yes, yes, you must! Remember your father! Finish the work he began!

RICHARD.

(*Determinedly and emphatically to audience.*)

I will!

(*To* MAYOR FARSON.)

I'll fight you!

But I'll give you a chance right now to withdraw, and if you don't, I'll make your entire record public!

Your machine cannot stand the storm of public disapproval!

Publicity will kill you!

(*Little* DICK *half rises.*)

MR. FARSON.

Publicity!

Hell!

Two can play at that game!

DICK.

(*Falling back on edge of divan, puts hands to head and screams.*)

Oh—oh—oh!

(*All rush to him except* FARSON *and* COLEMAN.)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

ONE WEEK LATER.

SCENE—*Same as Act II.*

MRS. RAFORD, GERTRUDE, RICHARD, DR. FAWTELL, *and* JEAN *grouped about child, who is seated at center stage.*

DR. FAWTELL *is making tests of* DICK'S *eyes.*

GERTRUDE, *sitting, alternately runs her hand through* DICK'S *hair and holds his hand.*

JEAN, *much concerned, trying to appear light-hearted to little* DICK; *gives a touch of jolliness whenever possible.*

MRS. RAFORD *standing near.*

The doctors make various eye tests.

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Putting light instrument over one of* DICK'S *eyes; speaks sympathetically.*)

You're not afraid, are you?

DICK.

(*Smiling slightly, but not flinching, pathetically and patiently.*)

No, sir!

JEAN.

It's nae the like of him to be afraid!

RICHARD.

Of course he isn't; it takes big things to frighten him.

(*Pats him on the cheek.*)

He's a little man!

Just a moment more, my boy.
We'll soon be through.
(*Makes light test; glances and questioning looks by* MRS. RAFORD *and* GERTRUDE *after test.*)
('*Phone rings.*)

JEAN.

He's a brave laddie; that he is.
(RICHARD *leaves group and goes to phone.*)
Hello!
(*Pause.*)
Aunt Mabel?
(*Pause.*)
Oh, yes!
(*Pause.*)
What is it?
(*Pause.*)
As important as that?
(*Pause.*)
Yes, come over at once.
(*Pause.*)
Yes, come right away.
(*Pause.*)
In five minutes?
(*Pause.*)
The sooner the better!
(*Pause.*)
Good-bye.
(*Puts down receiver, rejoins group.*)
Another victory, mother!

JEAN.

(*To* DICK.)

Lsiten to it, laddie!

MRS. RAFORD.

What is it?

RICHARD.

"Good Government League" support!

JEAN.

(*To* DICK.)

'Twould nae be good if it didna support him!

GERTRUDE.

(*To* DICK, *stroking his hair.*)

That's good for Mr. Richard, isn't it, dear?

DICK.

(*Smiling, wanly.*)

Yes, Miss Gertrude.

MRS. RAFORD.

I see only victory, Richard, only victory!

DR. FAWTELL.

(*Pausing a moment in his test work.*)

Hadn't we better begin calling you "the honorable" at once?

GERTRUDE.

Think of it!

Richard Leland—Raford!

The Honorable Mayor!

(*To* DICK.)

You'd like to see Mr. Richard, Mayor, wouldn't you?

(DICK *nods.*)

JEAN.

Mr. Richard would be the grand Mayor, wouldna he?

RICHARD.

There's many a slip—you know; but there's more good news.

GERTRUDE.

What?

RICHARD.

I don't know; too important even to be 'phoned. Aunt Mabel is coming to tell us.

MRS. RAFORD.

It must be very important.

(DICK *puts his hands to his head and moans very slightly.*)

(*Going to house 'phone.*)

Parker, when Miss Leland comes, send her to the library immediately.

(*Pause.*)

Yes, thank you.

(*Hangs up 'phone.*)

(DICK *appears more and more nervous, shows signs of great fatigue.*)

(RICHARD *and* DOCTOR *privately consult while* GERTRUDE *and* JEAN *affectionately play with* DICK.)

JEAN.

(*To* RICHARD.)

The poor bairnie is sae tired, Mr. Richard.

RICHARD.

(*To* DR. FAWTELL.)

We'd better stop for today.

(DR. FAWTELL *repacks instruments.*)

(*To* DICK.)

My little boy is tired, isn't he?
But he'll soon be rested.

(DICK *remains silent, smiles at* RICHARD, *and rolls his head back and forth.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *and* GERTRUDE *fondle little* DICK.)

DR. FAWTELL.

He's a brave little fellow.

GERTRUDE.

Indeed, he's always brave!

JEAN.

He's a real Robert Bruce!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* DICK.)

You'd like to go out into the garden, wouldn't you?

(*To* JEAN.)

Take him to see the gold fish.

JEAN.

(*Playfully to* DICK.)

And the frogs!

(DR. FAWTELL *places instrument case up stage right.*)

GERTRUDE.

(*To* DICK.)

I'll go with you, dear.
We'll go out quietly.
We'll catch the frogs sitting on the lily leaves.

(*Takes his hand, helps him down.*)

Dick.

(*Holding hands toward* Richard.)

Won't you come, too?

Richard.

(*Stoops, embraces him.*)

In just a moment; you run on with sister and Jean and I'll come soon.

(Gertrude *and* Jean *exit through garden doors with* Dick. Gertrude *turns, beckons* Dr. Fawtell — *he smiles, nods.*)

Dr. Fawtell.

(*To* Richard.)

Think I'll go out for a moment, too!

Richard.

(*Understanding and laughing.*)

All right, old man!

(*Exit* Fawtell.)

Mrs. Raford.

Paul is such a splendid fellow; Gertrude is so happy!

(*Changing subject.*)

But how is Dick?

Richard.

It's progressive, mother.

Conditions are certainly growing worse.

Mrs. Raford.

Can nothing be done?

Richard.

I don't know.

Mrs. Raford.

Can't even the pain be stopped?

RICHARD.

I'm afraid not, mother.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Meditatively.*)

What a strange, strange world——

Why should an innocent child be so terribly afflicted!

(*Directly.*)

What is the cause?

RICHARD.

It's inherited.

MISS LELAND.

(*Appearing in arch way to right. Mock heroically.*)

Victory to the victor!

RICHARD.

(*Turning.*)

Ah, Aunt Mabel, and what is the good news?

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, dear, tell us.

MISS LELAND.

(*Very enthusiastically, creating great expectancy.*)

I saw Mr. Forgan this morning!

ALL.

(*In concert.*)

Mr. Forgan?

MISS LELAND.

Yes, just plucked up courage and went to him.

RICHARD.

What did he say?

MISS LELAND.

Just listened—oh, he's a very great man—he listened—never said yes or no—never asked a question—just listened!

MRS. RAFORD.

Didn't he commit himself?

MISS LELAND.

Not then, but the three afternoon papers controlled by him are out with an editorial commendation of Richard!

Think of it—and only five hours since I called!

That's the way he works!

(JEAN *enters with cards; gives them to* MRS. RAFORD.)

Richard, your nomination is assured.

Nothing can come between us and victory!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Looking up, shows surprise.*)

They're calling!

BOTH.

Who?

MRS. RAFORD.

The Mayor! and Mr. Coleman!

RICHARD.

Is it possible?

MRS. RAFORD.

What do they expect to gain by coming here?

RICHARD.

I don't understand how they dare come.

MISS LELAND.

They've seen the afternoon papers.

They know they're beaten.

RICHARD.

We've got them on the hip; let's see them!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* JEAN.)

Show the gentlemen up.

(RICHARD *puts hands in pocket, squares his shoulders and walks back of* MISS LELAND *to extreme right of stage, down front.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *showing slight loss of self-possession and customary calm, nervously walks to window at left and waits.*)

(*Embarrassing silence for a few seconds.*)

(MISS LELAND, *calm, looks first at* RICHARD *and then at* MRS. RAFORD.)

JEAN.

(*Announcing very formally.*)

Mr. Coleman and Mayor Farson.

(COLEMAN *and* FARSON *enter.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Very pleasantly and very graciously.*)

Good afternoon, Mrs. Raford, Miss Leland, Dr. Richard.

(FARSON *nods to each in same order.*)

(*Each replies only with a gesture of recognition.*)

(COLEMAN *and* FARSON *left standing up center, appear disconcerted.*)

(*To* MISS LELAND.)

You are looking exceptionally well; as charming as ever, Miss Leland.

(Mrs. Raford *seats herself down stage, left.*)

Miss Leland.

Yes, I am exceptionally well, and I have exceptional reasons for feeling exceptionally well.

I had a conference with Mr. Forgan this morning.

Mr. Farson.

(*With suppressed force.*)

You saw Mr. Forgan?

Miss Leland.

(*Indifferently.*)

Yes, we had an hour's conference.

(*Seats herself indifferently, down stage, right.*)

Mr. Coleman.

(*Very suavely and calmly.*)

We have called hoping to be able to quiet the disagreeable rumors that are going about.

We regret exceedingly that anything should break into the friendship that has existed so many years between the Rafords, the Mayor and myself.

We apologize for our attitude in the past.

What we did, we did because we thought at the time that it was for the best interests of your estate and for the best interests of the city.

We see that we were wrong; we wish to apologize and re-right any wrong we have done.

Richard.

And what do you propose?

MR. COLEMAN.

Unity, harmony.

MR. FARSON.

Compromise.

MR. COLEMAN.

(*To* RICHARD.)

The publicity is unpleasant.

I have my standing in the business world.

Mrs. Raford has her position in society.

It matters not whether things said be true or untrue, they are harmful—unpleasant!

The notoriety will affect my business; it will affect society's attitude toward your mother.

MRS. RAFORD.

And what do you propose?

MR. COLEMAN.

Harmony.

RICHARD.

(*Indignantly.*)

You ask me to withdraw?

MR. COLEMAN.

For *this* election—yes!

MRS. RAFORD.

No!

RICHARD.

Never!

MR. COLEMAN.

Our whole purpose is but to save the present situation.

As I understand it, you are fighting for principle and are not personally desirous of becoming Mayor.

But the masses of the people—the voters—and even the papers are beginning to think that this is a personal contest between you and Mayor Farson.

Now, Richard, if you will meet us just half way, we'll carry out the reforms you're interested in, and support you as a candidate to succeed Mayor Farson next term.

If we combine forces now, we can elect Farson.

But if we fight each other, some other candidate—some dark horse—may secure the nomination and both you and the Mayor lose out.

RICHARD.

I appreciate your plea for unified effort, but I am fighting Mayor Farson and everything he stands for.

I am fighting for civic righteousness.

It is not this campaign alone in which I am interested.

I want to arouse the public conscience on all matters of civic and moral interest.

I want the co-operation of every honest man and woman.

If I knew I were going to absolute defeat in this campaign, I should lead the fight just the same.

But I am sure of victory, and not only am I sure of victory in this campaign, but I see the movement spreading.

I see a moral awakening of all the people.

I see industrial slavery of childhood abolished.

I see the sex slavery of woman eliminated.

I feel that I am to be a factor in this movement.

I feel that I am called to lead it, and neither wealth nor influence, nor promise of future power—nothing can swerve me!

(*The pathetic wailing of a child is heard.*)

(*Astonishment appears on the faces of* COLEMAN *and* FARSON.)

(MISS LELAND, *tense, looks up stage.*)

(RICHARD *stares in desperate fear at third arch up stage left.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *holds breath as if paralyzed, hands grasping arm of chair, eyes defocused towards audience.*)

(*Little* DICK, *arms distended, eyes staring wildly, enters through arch up stage, piteously wailing.*)

(RICHARD *puts his left hand to his head.*)

(*Little* DICK *advances toward center stage.*)

DICK.

(*Piteously.*)

Richard, Mr. Richard!

(*Stumbles against side of chair.*)

My eyes have gone out!

My eyes have gone out!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Rises, looking toward garden doors.*)

Oh, doctor, doctor!

(RICHARD *rushes to little* DICK, *passionately clasps him in his arms and tenderly caresses him.*)

(DR. FAWTELL *rushes in, followed by* GERTRUDE.)

DICK.

(*Pathetically, almost sobbing.*)

Oh Mr. Richard, I can't see!
I can't see!
I can't see!

RICHARD.

(*Brokenly.*)

There—there—little boy—don't cry.

(MRS. RAFORD *sinks again into chair;* DR. FAWTELL *signals* MISS LELAND *to look after* MRS. RAFORD *while he helps* RICHARD *out with child.*)

(MISS LELAND *and* GERTRUDE *support* MRS. RAFORD *and lead her out.*)

(FARSON *stands still.*)

(COLEMAN *calmly walks down stage and about, stops a moment, looks meditatively and calculatingly at audience, resumes calm walk.*)

(FARSON *deeply affected.*)

(COLEMAN *thoughtful.*)

MR. FARSON.

Poor little kid!

(COLEMAN *does not reply.*)

It must be hell to go blind!

MR. COLEMAN.

It has greatly affected Richard.

MR. FARSON.

Dam it, it has affected me, too!

MR. COLEMAN.

I mean it has an extraordinary affect upon Richard.

MR. FARSON.

Well, he likes the kid.

(COLEMAN *walks about.*)

(FARSON *seats himself.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Looking straight at* FARSON.)

Mayor, do you realize that that little fellow is the cause of all the trouble we have had with the Rafords?

MR. FARSON.

Don't blame the kid.

MR. COLEMAN.

I don't *blame* him, but he *is* the cause.

Don't you remember how all this started?

You and I called down to the tenements where we found this little fellow.

Richard miraculously reformed, ready to lead a new life!

MR. FARSON.

(*Indifferently.*)

Oh, drop it!

(*Pause.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Walks towards portrait, studies it a moment.*)

(*Turns to* FARSON.)

Remarkable likeness, isn't it, Mayor?

MR. FARSON.

Yes, they say she does do good work.

(COLEMAN *walks to wall window and picks up miniature.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Handing miniature to* FARSON.)

Remarkable likeness of Richard' isn't it?

(COLEMAN *gestures toward portrait;* FARSON *looks at miniature, strikes chair and exclaims.*)

MR. FARSON.

My God!

(*He sits a moment thinking.*)

(COLEMAN *stands to side watching him.*)

(FARSON *looks out at audience and whistles softly.*)

And I've got the proof!

MR. COLEMAN.

What's that?

MR. FARSON.

I've got the proof!

MR. COLEMAN.

Well?

MR. FARSON.

On that very day he took out a marriage license; I saw it on the records.

I tried to kid him about it.

He turned it aside as a joke.

(*Hands miniature back to* COLEMAN, *who replaces it.*)

(FARSON *rises energetically, walks forward and back, turns forward, looks* COLEMAN *in the face.*)

We've got him!

(RICHARD *appears in arch way, pale, nervous, as though in great mental suffering.*)

(*The two men turn to him.*)

(*He speaks quietly and softly.*)

RICHARD.

You must understand, gentlemen, that our conference cannot be continued.

Even if there were anything to be discussed, I am not now in the condition or mood to discuss it with you.

I think, however, that you are definitely informed as to my position and I think you must know I do not intend to alter it.

MR. FARSON.

Yes, yes, I remember what you said.

MR. COLEMAN.

My dear, Richard, do be seated just a moment.

(RICHARD *makes negative gesture.*)

I know the affliction of the little fellow has greatly affected you.

But matters have just developed which make it necessary for us to have a few more minutes with you.

(RICHARD *indifferently drops into chair up center.*)

And first, we wish to express our sympathy.

We feel we understand how deeply the boy's affliction affects you.

He has grown very dear to you, has he not?

RICHARD.

Yes, we are all very fond of him?

MR. COLEMAN.

Poor little fellow!

I heard him pleading last week for a papa and a mama.

Strange, how cruel this world is to some of these little ones.

Nothing can really take the place of a mother's love.

(*Pause.*)

(*Narrowly watching* RICHARD.)

Nor a father's, either.

(RICHARD *at the moment, feeling he is watched, gives no sign of recognizing any hidden meaning.*)

(*Later he quickly and covertly glances first at* COLEMAN, *then at* FARSON, *indicating to the audience that he is now suspicious of* COLEMAN'S *questioning.*)

And the father was never known, was he?

RICHARD.

(*Indifferently.*)

No, I think not.

MR. COLEMAN.

Poor little fellow!

Can't anything be done for him?

RICHARD.

(*Despairingly.*)

Nothing.

MR. COLEMAN.

Are you certain?

RICHARD.

Absolutely.

Dr. Fawtell and I have called in the best specialists. They all agree with us.

MR. COLEMAN.

What's the cause?

RICHARD.

Inheritance.

MR. COLEMAN.

Ah, yes, the mother.

RICHARD.

(*Quickly.*)

No, no, the father.

MR. COLEMAN.

The father!

Oh,——o, yes!

(*Pause.*)

(*Walking about stage, meditatively looking at portrait.*)

Poor little fellow, poor little fellow!

This face is an angel's face!

(*Turning to* RICHARD.)

Wonderful likeness, isn't it, Richard?

RICHARD.

Yes, remarkable.

MR. COLEMAN.

It always has a sort of mystic effect upon me—something strangely familiar about the face that takes me back to your boyhood days.

One day I spoke of it to Gertrude.

She said it had the same effect upon her.

Strange, isn't it?

RICHARD.

I'd never noticed it.

Mr. Coleman.

No, I suppose not.

(*Deliberately.*)

You could hardly be expected to remember yourself as a boy.

Richard.

(*Coldly.*)

What do you mean?

Mr. Coleman.

That if you enter public life the story of your parenthood of little Dick will probably become public!

Richard.

(*Jumping to his feet in great anger.*)

So this is your game?

You think you'll win by slandering me; but you're mistaken!

I demand that you leave here at once!

If you again hint the accusation you have just made, I will have you arrested for criminal libel!

I will prosecute you for blackmail!

Good afternoon.

(*Starts to leave.*)

Mr. Farson.

(*Jumping up and catching hold of* Richard's *shoulder.*)

Hold on, young man, just one thing more.

(*Looking* Richard *straight in the eye.*)

You forget that down among the dusty archives at the city hall there is a record of your marriage license; your signature.

That would stand in any court in the land.
Nice story about a reform candidate!
Great scoop for the papers!
How about "publicity" now?

(RICHARD *quietly sinks into chair, clasping arms of the chair tensely.*)

It'll ruin your career, humiliate your sister, disgrace your mother, and stain the little fellow's name for life!

MR. COLEMAN.

Considering all this, would it not be better for you to withdraw your name?

(*They wait while* RICHARD *remains silent, eyes closed.*)

MR. FARSON.

Will you withdraw?

(MRS. RAFORD, *evidently rather weak and very pale, is seen with* MISS LELAND *entering through first arch up right.*)

(*Quietly to* RICHARD.)

Will you?

(RICHARD *nods.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *and* MISS LELAND *enter through middle arch.*)

(COLEMAN *greets them.*)

MR. COLEMAN.

I trust you are better, Mrs. Raford.

(MRS. RAFORD *bows.*)

(RICHARD, *at hearing his mother's name, rises and nervously moves up stage right.*)

I fear, Mrs. Raford, that we have intruded too long.

(FARSON *crosses back of* COLEMAN *and moves down stage left.*)

(RICHARD *seats himself in chair formerly occupied by* MISS LELAND.)

I regret the sad occurrence of this afternoon, and trust that something may yet be done for the little fellow.

I am glad, however, that we have been able to convince Richard that it is unwise for him to continue to seek the nomination.

He has given us his promise that he will not be a candidate for Mayor.

(MISS LELAND *receives the announcement with astonishment and indignation.*)

(MRS. RAFORD *with astonishment, fear and suspicion.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Almost piteously.*)

Richard!

MISS LELAND.

It can't be true!

RICHARD.

(*Controlling himself with very great effort, lifting his bowed head and turning it partly towards his mother, speaks brokenly.*)

Yes, mother, I've consented.

(MISS LELAND, *indignantly suspicious, furtively watches calmly smiling face of*

MR. COLEMAN *and notes grim satisfaction on face of* FARSON.)

(*Her attitude shows that she suspects foul play.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Moving step or two nearer* RICHARD.)

But Richard?

RICHARD.

It is best.

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Pleadingly.*)

No, no, no, you must not!

MISS LELAND.

(*Decidedly.*)

You cannot!

RICHARD.

(*Despairingly.*)

I must!

MRS. RAFORD.

You're ill, Richard!

You don't know what you're doing!

You must not withdraw now!

You must continue the fight!

MISS LELAND.

You can't withdraw now.

We're in this fight for the public good; it is not a matter of personal preference; it is your duty!

The city needs your services.

You are as much bound as though the nation needed you as a soldier!

MRS. RAFORD.

Yes, Richard, don't you hear, don't you understand?

It is your duty!

You must continue!

RICHARD.

(*With finality.*)

Mother, I cannot!

MRS. RAFORD.

You cannot!

(*Turning with indignation, first to* FARSON, *and then to* COLEMAN.)

I do not know what you have said to Richard; how you have influenced him; how you have threatened him; but he is my son and I'll fight for him!

He may consent to withdraw; but the people are awakened.

They will demand him and he will be nominated.

MR. FARSON.

You don't know what you're fighting.

MR. COLEMAN.

But Richard does.

He knows it's best to withdraw.

MISS LELAND.

You're keeping something under cover now.

But I'll find out what it is.

MR. FARSON.

You'd better let the matter drop.

MR. COLEMAN.

I think it would be wiser to do so.

MRS. RAFORD.

But we'll not let the matter drop!
We'll find out what it is.
And when we've found out, we'll fight you!
We'll fight you to the end!

MISS LELAND.

(*Crossing to* RICHARD.)

Tell me, Richard!
What is it? What is it?

(COLEMAN, *standing back of* MRS. RAFORD, *quietly yet obviously takes miniature of* RICHARD *from wall window, and quietly holds it in front of* MRS. RAFORD.)

MR. COLEMAN.

(*Quietly to* MRS. RAFORD.)

I think you'd better know.

(MRS. RAFORD *gazes at it wonderingly.*)

(COLEMAN *turns, points to portrait, and holds up miniature so that she can compare the two.*)

(*For a second her eyes are riveted upon portrait and miniature.*)

(COLEMAN *carefully replaces miniature.*)

(*Her hands grip, slowly she turns her eyes back to audience, her whole face showing she understands.*)

(*Her eyes turn toward* RICHARD.)

(*She sobs once.*)

MRS. RAFORD.

Oh, Richard, Richard!

(*She sinks into chair.*)

(RICHARD *rising, rushes to his mother, falls on one knee, clasps her right hand in both of his and kisses it.*)

RICHARD.

Oh, mother, mother!

(MISS LELAND *realizes* MRS. RAFORD'S *condition, but does not know the cause.*)

(*Her eyes show how intensely she is thinking, trying to grasp the cause of it all.*)

I've worked so hard to be of use in the world. I've tried so hard to undo the past.

I wanted to make it less possible for others to go wrong.

All these years I have prayed and prayed and prayed that this wrong might be forgotten, that you might never know of it, that you would never suffer from it.

And, oh, how I have prayed that little Dick would never know!

It's been awful to hear the little fellow plead and plead for a father and not be able to tell him!

I had hoped some time to adopt him; give him his rightful name, but without the stain of my wrong.

(MISS LELAND *conveys to audience that she understands the secret.*)

But now all my plans are wrecked, and all my hopes are gone!

All my prayers have failed—little Dick is blind—blind—and you—you—my mother, the mother

who has loved and cared for me—you must bear —you must bear the burden of it all!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Putting her hands upon his head.*)

Oh, my boy, my boy!

(MISS LELAND *quietly wipes her eyes.*)

RICHARD.

(*Continuing.*)

Mother, I had hoped to make you so happy; I wanted to make you so proud of me, yet all I bring you is sorrow and humiliation—overwhelming disgrace!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*With resignation and determination.*)

We mustn't think of that; we mustn't fear it; we must face it!

We'll not give in, Richard!

We'll continue the fight!

RICHARD.

No, no, mother!

Think of the shame, the suffering, the dishonor, the disgrace it would bring upon you!

I won't do it!

I can't make you suffer so!

Besides, it won't do any good.

It won't do any good!

I can't enter public life again!

If I attack an evil, they'll expose me; they'll ruin me!

They'll jeer me for rebelling against vice; and they'll disgrace you; they'll humiliate you!

And I can't help it! I can't change it!

MISS LELAND.

(*Coming up stage and standing behind* MRS. RAFORD.)

(*Putting her hand affectionately upon* RICHARD'S *shoulder.*)

But you can live above it.

You are only one of hundreds who're snared in the vicious web of our social life!

(*Turning to* MRS. RAFORD.)

But Richard is right, dear.

He cannot re-enter public life.

MRS. RAFORD.

But we must not give up!

RICHARD.

Oh, mother, mother, forgive me! forgive me—I didn't realize! I didn't know the wrong I was doing!

Forgive me! Forgive me!

MISS LELAND.

(*Trying to quiet* RICHARD.)

You were not to blame, Richard.

You were not to blame.

MRS. RAFORD.

No, no, no!

He was not to blame!

He was not to blame; he was only a boy!

MR. COLEMAN.

Of course, Richard was only a boy, only twenty-one, led on by a designing, unprincipled——

RICHARD.

(*Interrupting.*)

No, no, that isn't true! It's a lie!

(*To* MRS. RAFORD.)

Don't blame her mother.

It was I who sought her.

I followed her.

I hunted her.

She was in Warmen's.

At the glove counter.

I knew of my chum's affairs.

I knew their methods.

She got but six a week; she had to dress; pay her room rent; her car fare, buy her food.

I knew she had no pleasures,—never a theatre, never an evening's recreation, not even a decent room to live in.

I knew all this.

I knew it would lead to hopelessness—to despair, to desperation.

I waited!

I waited till the right time came!

I made her long for the things I could buy her;

I even pretended to love her!

I hunted her; I *hunted* her! She was helpless!

The conditions were all against her!

MISS LELAND.

They are all helpless!

It is one man or another!

It's one of your class, or it's one of their own class!

Boys receive double the pay the girls do!

The extra pay is the purchase price!

RICHARD.

Oh, my God, mother!
Don't blame her!
Conditions are all wrong!
They were all against her!
I was wrong; she was good.
She even forgave me!
Never spoke to anyone of the wrong I did her!
What a beast I was!

MISS LELAND.

(*Sympathetically, not as a preachment.*)

It is not the case of one man, but of thousands of men!

Under present conditions——

MRS. RAFORD.

(*Rising and interrupting.*)

But the present conditions are wrong! All wrong!

I've been working blindly in the past; I see more clearly now!

Man and women must work together.

(*Looking at audience.*)

It is man's nature to seek, to fight for what he wants,—to conquer!

He willingly fights to the death to protect his own—his wife—his children—but only woman has the mother love—only woman makes universal sacrifice.

(*Objectively to others about her.*)

Our wrongs, — woman's wrongs, and the wrongs of our children—will never be righted

till woman has the privilege of working with man!

(*Half to herself, half to* RICHARD *and* MISS LELAND.)

We've a right to that privilege and we'll fight for it!

(RICHARD *rises.*)

It is the problem of restoring to woman, motherhood and the larger vision of the home,—for the home extends wherever the child may be—into the streets, the schools, the factory, the office!

(*More intense.*)

Once our schools were small and were near our home. We knew all the conditions surrounding them.

Now, they are further away and not the mother, but politics, is the dominating factor!

Once we had the right of knowing where our children's food came from and out of what it was composed——

(*Turning to* FARSON *and* COLEMAN *intense*)

But man has taken that privilege from us!

Our food now comes from the dairy,—the cannery—the bakery—the market—we do not know who handles it or how they may pollute or poison it!

But we have a right to know—an inherent mother right!

Once our children worked with us in our homes or in shops near our homes, but now millions of

them go to the factories! They work in the cold —they work in the dark—their bodies are dwarfed and their minds are stunted!

And we are given no legal right to regulate the conditions under which they work!

(*More emotional.*)

Our right—the woman's right—the mother's right has been taken from her!

Man grinds out cheap goods from the ill paid labor of boys and girls!

He accumulates thousands of dollars per annum.

He surfeits his own wife and children with luxuries, but he cares nothing for the wives and children of other men—they are so many tools of industry to him—to be used, worn out, and tossed aside when no longer of value!

Oh, I did not understand before—but now I do. Now I understand; I see our boys suffering under the burden of ceaseless work, the long, long hours for innumerable days—the helplessness—the hopelessness—the endlessness of it all!

I see our girls—exhausted, breaking under the nervous strain, wearied to death—paid but half what the men are paid—enough only for meagre existence—no pleasures, no recreations except those supplied by men!

Mr. Coleman.

But such conditions have always existed!

We cannot do away with inequality!

MRS. RAFORD.

But woman has a right to equality; a right to life; a right to work!

She was created the helpmate of man, not his slave!

But man has taken woman's work from her.

Either he gowns her, bejewels her, surrounds her with extravagances, or he forces her to the factory or the brothel.

Oh, man may boast of progress in science, in industry, in commerce—he may turn out thousands of yards of cloth, he may mine millions of tons of coal, he may unearth a billion tons of silver and gold—he may prepare food in his factories for a hundred million people; he may build museums and libraries and universities—he may endow churches and hospitals and almshouses—but, working alone, he has failed! He has failed!

Of what value are all our commerce shows? Our industrial expositions? Our conferences on art? Our ecclesiastical gatherings? Our talk about morality and religion?

Of what use are all these if the thin, joyless faces of poverty-stricken children peer out at us from broken windows and darkened corners—if the bleached faces of the children of the helplessly rich look into our eyes, hopelessly pleading for something to do?

If young girls and young men, because of industrial conditions, because of the economic law of supply and demand are helplessly forced into

lives of hopeless immorality—of what can man boast?

(*Emphatically to* FARSON *and* COLEMAN.)

When I tried in a small way to remedy conditions on my own properties, you, who were trusted by my father, opposed, deceived, betrayed me!

When I attempted to have your trusteeship discharged, you hindered me by legal technicalities and court proceedures!

And now you threaten Richard with blackmail!

And to protect me, to save me from shame and suffering, to save the name of Raford from dishonor, he abandons his ambition for a career, he abandons all his plans for the public good, all his cherished hopes to be of service in the world! To protect me—to save me—to save me from you—he acquiesces in your demand!

(*Majestically.*)

But he shall not withdraw!

He shall continue the fight!

(RICHARD'S *face very intense.*)

Oh, I despise you—I abhor you—but I thank you for forcing me to see the larger vision.

(*Turns quickly, steps to electric button, right of center arch, presses it, very obviously several times, then quickly returns to former position.*)

(*To* FARSON *and* COLEMAN.)

At first it was only my properties, my responsibilities, my problem—now it is the problem of all

womanhood—woman and man—working together to redeem ourselves and our children!

(JEAN *enters in answer to ring; stands near right arch waiting for instructions.*)

We are in the midst of a social revolution—a revolution for the betterment of man—for the restoration of woman!

I know such a conflict means service and sacrifice!

I am ready to serve; I am willing to sacrifice; to sacrifice wealth, social prestige and position!

(*To* FARSON *and* COLEMAN *direct.*)

You may hinder us!

You may delay us!

You may retard us!

You may even defeat us in the coming campaign, but in the end we shall gain the victory!

You may seek to blacken Richard's reputation, you seek to intimidate me; you may seek to gain your end by scandal, and libel, and bribery, and blackmail. But I'll defeat you!

(*To* JEAN.)

Jean, tell Parker to 'phone for reporters of *all* the papers! To come here at once! Here to my home!

RICHARD.

(*In protest and astonishment.*)

Mother!

MRS. RAFORD.

(*To* COLEMAN *and* FARSON, *ignoring* RICHARD'S *interruption.*)

I defy you, I defy your organization.

I,—I, myself will give the entire story of Richard's wrong to the public!

I'll give it to the press!

I'll have them publish it far and wide!

But I'll also make public the part you have played!

And I know the people will understand!

I'll do it willingly; I'll do it gladly,

(RICHARD *puts his arm about his mother*)

for in the future I see man and woman working together!

Not man alone, nor woman alone—but men and women as humanists—together!

CURTAIN.

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